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# The Letters of Wolfe Tone.



*EDITED BY  
BULMER HOBSON.*

MARTIN LESTER, LTD.

DAWSON STREET, :: :: DUBLIN.

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IRENE DWEN ANDREWS













THE  
LETTERS OF THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.

“ Unhappy is the man and the  
nation, whose destiny depends on  
the will of another.

TONE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE autobiographical writings of Wolfe Tone and John Mitchel's *Jail Journal* may well rank as the two best books produced under the influence of the national idea in modern Ireland. To which should be ascribed first place will depend upon the critic's individual taste.

The *Jail Journal* was written not merely to while away the tedium of imprisonment, but as an exposition of Mitchel's opinions, and was published as soon as opportunity offered, while, on the other hand, Tone wrote his Journal for his wife and a small circle of intimate friends, and there is no evidence to show that he ever contemplated their publication to a wider circle. It is to this fact that much of the charm of his autobiography is due, for few men could have written so intimately of every private concern for the public, and certainly Tone was not of their number. If he ever had any idea of ultimate publication he could only have regarded his Journals as a quarry from which a future biographer might select his materials, and not as a work to be published with

the few excisions which his son made in preparing them for the printer. It is extremely fortunate that this should be so, for it would have been a very different and a very inferior book were it written in the stilted and formal phrasing that passed current in the publications of the end of the eighteenth century.

Of the autobiography itself, though much has been preserved, a great deal has unfortunately been lost. In October, 1796, Tone's wife and children were in America and preparing to join him in France. They left the Journals of 1791-2-3-4 and 5, together with the manuscripts of his pamphlets and newspaper articles and the materials for a Political History of Ireland which he had collected, in the care of Dr. Reynolds of Philadelphia. Reynolds was a United Irishman who had, like Tone, been involved in the conspiracy of the Rev. William Jackson in Ireland in 1794, and had gone to America when Jackson was arrested. When Tone also went to America in the following year, Reynolds was settled in Philadelphia, and when he left his family and set off on his great mission to France, Dr. Reynolds acted as the trusted friend and adviser of Mrs. Tone. In one of her letters to Thomas Russell (October 9th, 1796), Mrs. Tone speaks in the highest terms of the kindness and attention she had received from Reynolds, but unfortunately he did not, after they had gone to

Europe, take any care of Tone's papers, and when his son returned to claim them many years afterwards, a great part had been lost irrevocably. A few fragments only of the earlier Journals could be found, those of 1793-4 and 5 were gone, as well as most of the other papers entrusted to the careless hands of Reynolds.

The loss is very great for it was during those missing years that the seed was sown which was harvested in blood in 1798; it was in those years that the Society of United Irishmen grew from being the debating ground of a few ardent spirits to the closely knit organisation that absorbed all the virile forces on the national side in Ireland, and Tone, better than any other, could have revealed to us the hidden workings of those fruitful, eventful years had his Journals not had been lost. The letters, now published for the first time, will not make good this loss; only three of them, indeed, belong to the early period, but though they shed little new light upon the political happenings of the time, they are full of the gaiety that made Tone beloved by his contemporaries, and they will be welcomed by all who have come to know and to love the man who has portrayed himself so wonderfully in the autobiography.

In the following pages no attempt will be made to write a new biography of Tone—for that the reader

must be referred to his own—and biographical details will be only given so far as they are necessary to make the references in the letters clear. As it would be impossible to write any substitute for the autobiography, I shall seek to do no more than to supplement it with the letters that I have been fortunate enough to find scattered among several collections of old papers, and it is merely as a supplement to Tone's own great book that I offer them to the reader.

I have included in this volume the letters published in the first edition of the autobiography (Washington, 1826), together with several not hitherto published and it is possible that others may yet come to light.

If any readers can assist in tracing other published or unpublished letters of Tone's, their co-operation will be very warmly welcomed by the editor.

B.H.



# THE LETTERS OF THEOBALD WOLFE TONE.

## I. IN IRELAND.

Wolfe Tone's entry into Irish politics may be said to date definitely from the publication of his first pamphlet, "A Review of the Last Session of Parliament," in 1790. He was at that time, twenty-seven years of age. The pamphlet was a defence of the Whig Club which had been started by Lord Charlemont, Henry Grattan, and George Ponsonby, and which was at the moment, the object of attack by every hired scribe that the Government of the day could enlist in the service. The object of the Club was to press for a reform in the Irish Parliament, but its members were not the men to push reform very far. Like the Liberals of our own time, their precepts were models of enlightenment and justice—while their actions were weak, vacillating or often flagrantly dishonest. Tone, when he wrote in their defence, was not unaware of their weakness:—

Though I was very far from entirely approving the system of the Whig Club, and much less their principles and motives, yet, seeing them at the

time the best constituted political body which the country afforded, and agreeing with most of their positions, though my own private opinions went infinitely farther, I thought I could venture on their defence without violating my own consistency.

This support of the Whig Club went no further than his pamphlet. His was a mind, not to be satisfied with a superficial view; he sought the root causes of the trouble in Ireland, and he quickly found them.

A closer examination into the situation of my native country had very considerably extended my views, and as I was sincerely and honestly attached to her interests, I soon found reason not to regret that the Whigs had not thought me an object worthy of their cultivation. I made speedily what was to me a great discovery, though I might have found it in Swift and Molyneux, that the influence of England was the radical vice of our Government, and consequently, that Ireland would never be either free, prosperous, or happy, until she was independent, and that independence was unattainable whilst the connection with England existed.

Having formed his theory, Tone devoted the rest of his life to the attempt to put it into practice, and in this, he was greatly assisted and encouraged by a friendship which he formed at this period (1790)

with Thomas Russell. They met by chance one day in the Gallery of the House of Commons, and entered into a discussion on the politics of the day. Russell was a supporter of the Whigs, while Tone had outgrown that creed, and was full of his rapidly forming plans for a union of all classes in Ireland to break the connection with England. The acquaintance so casually formed ripened quickly into friendship, and from that time on, they worked in the closest associations, Russell coming completely to share Tone's political views. Several of the letters, to be quoted in the succeeding pages, were written to Russell, and the originals are to be found among Russell's papers, in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.

In the year following that in which the friendship of Tone and Russell commenced, the latter left Dublin and went to Belfast to join his regiment. He had just been appointed an Ensign in the 64th Regiment of Foot, then quartered in that town, a position which he only held for a few months. In Belfast, he found that the opinions which he and Tone had shared in Dublin were already stirring amongst the most enlightened of the merchants there.

At that period, the politics of Belfast, and particularly of the Volunteer movement, were principally controlled by a secret committee consisting of Samuel

Neilson, Thomas MacCabe, William Sinclair, William and Robert Simms, and a few others.

These men were the most far-seeing and statesman-like of their contemporaries, and with them Russell entered into the closest association and intimacy, and it was through him that Tone also was brought into touch with them. Out of that alliance, the Society of United Irishmen shortly afterwards came.

Tone's connection with the Catholic Committee was also indirectly brought about by the stay of his friend, Russell, in Belfast. The most enlightened of the Protestant community in that town were strongly in favour of the abolition of the Penal Laws against the Catholics, but there was a considerable section still opposed to the admission of Irish Catholics to the most elementary rights of citizenship. At a meeting of the Belfast Volunteers, a declaration respecting the Catholic claims was proposed, but met with so much opposition that it had to be withdrawn. This declaration had been written by Tone at Russell's request, and its rejection forced him to consider anew the relations existing between the various sections of the Irish people. He thus records the result of his reflections in one of the most striking passages in all his writings:—

Russell wrote me an account of all this, and it immediately set me thinking more seriously than



I had yet done upon the state of Ireland. I soon formed my theory, and on that theory I have unvaryingly acted ever since.

To subvert the tyranny of our execrable Government, to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country—these were my objects. To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of all past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishman in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter—these were my means.

As a step towards bringing the Dissenters and Catholics together he published in September, 1791, a pamphlet entitled "An Argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland," the object of which was to convince the Dissenters that they and the Catholics "had but one common interest and one common enemy; that the depression and slavery of Ireland was produced and perpetuated by the divisions existing between them." This pamphlet met with much success, and both the Catholics and the Belfast Dissenters printed and circulated large editions. It had the important result of introducing Tone to the Catholic Committee, to none of the members of which he was known when the pamphlet was written, and shortly afterwards he became their secretary

and agent. His arguments were no less successful with the Belfast people, and the first or Green Company of the Belfast Volunteers elected him an honorary member, and he was invited to visit the north to assist at the birth of the Society of United Irishmen.

Tone went to Belfast in October, 1791, accompanied by Thomas Russell, who had, in the meantime, left the Army and returned to Dublin. The Society of United Irishmen was successfully launched, and its declaration, written by Tone, was to form for the next few years the rallying ground of all that was best in Irish political life. Only one letter written to Mrs. Tone during this visit has been preserved. It was published in *Tone's Life*, edited by his son in 1826.

BELFAST, *October 20, 1791.*

My Dearest Life and Soul,

I wrote a few posts since, just to let you know that I was alive and well. I did not tell you any news as I Journalise everything, and promise myself great pleasure from reading my papers over with you. I have christened Russell by the name of P.P., Clerk of this Parish, and he makes a very conspicuous figure in my memoirs. If you do not know who P.P. was, the joke will be lost on you. I find the people here extremely civil; I have dined out every day since I came here, and have now more

engagements than I can possibly fulfil. I did hope to get away on Sunday, but I fear I shall not be able to move before Thursday. You cannot conceive how much this short absence has endeared you to me. You think it is better for us to be always together, but I am sure from my own experience you are wrong; for I cannot leave you now, though but for one week, that I do not feel my heart cling to you and to our dear little ones. I have no more to say but to desire my love to all of you, and am dearest love, ever yours. If you have not written before this you need not write; I wish, however, I had one letter from you.

—T. W. TONE.

P.S.—Dear Matty: As to anything your wise husband may have said of me, I neither desire to know, nor do I care. It is sufficient, generally, "*I had a friend.*" I am at present, composing a pretty moral treatise on temperance, and will dedicate it to myself as I don't know who is likely to profit so much by it. Pray, give my love to your virgin daughter and infant progeny. "God bless everybody." Yours, till death.—P.P.

P.S.—P.P. has been scribbling his bit of nonsense. He is a great fool, and I have much trouble to manage him. I assure you that you will be much amused by his exploits in my Journal, which is a

thousand times wittier than Swift's, as in Justice it ought; for it is written for the amusement of one a thousand times more amiable than Stella. I conclude in the words of my friend P.P. God bless everybody.

P.S.—P.P. calls me “his friend Mr. John Hutton,” but God knows the heart. He is writing a Journal, but mine is worth fifty of it.

After a stay of three weeks in Belfast, “which I look back upon as perhaps the pleasantest in my life,” Tone, accompanied by Russell, returned to Dublin, determined to found a club of the United Irishmen in the capital. This they shortly accomplished, and the United Irishmen of Dublin, with the Hon. Simon Butler as Chairman, and James Napper Tandy as Secretary, adopted the declaration of the Belfast Society and opened a correspondence with them. The Society, both in Dublin and Belfast, spread with great rapidity, and in its membership Catholics and Protestants came together in a new and firm union. Throughout Ulster the movement quickly extended its sway, and in Connacht great progress was made. The other two provinces accepted it more slowly, but its influence in healing the old dissensions and feuds that had separated Irishmen into hostile factions was felt throughout the whole of Ireland.



A letter from Tone to his wife, written at the end of 1791, gives a glowing description of the enthusiasm evoked by the new movement. Mrs. Tone was staying, probably at Prosperous, in Co. Kildare, and her husband was in Dublin when it was written.

Dear Love,

I have nothing more to say than that affairs are going on here swimmingly. We have got up a club of United Irishmen in Dublin, similar to that in Belfast, who have adopted our resolutions, with a short preface. We have pretty well secured all Connaught, and are fighting out the other two provinces. It is wonderful with what zeal, spirit, activity, and secrecy all things are conducted. I have dined with divers Papists, and in particular with Lord Dunsany, who lately reformed, but is still a good Catholic in his heart. He begged the honour of my acquaintance, and I shall call on him to-morrow. My book\* is running like wildfire. The Castle has got hold of the story, but very imperfectly. All they know is that the disorder broke out in Belfast and was carried there by one Toole or Toomey, or some such name, a lawyer. I suppose they will endeavour to find out this Mr. Toole or Toomey, or whatever his name is.

George Ponsonby is, on a sudden, grown vastly

\*An argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland (1791)

civil and attentive . . . and so much for politics. I learn and I am sorry that you have got a return of the pain in your head. Willy\* is growing too strong for you, and therefore, I beg you may wean him immediately. He is old enough now and you must not injure your own health for that little monkey, especially when you know how precious your health is to me.

My stay in town is of such infinite consequence that I am sure you would not wish me to quit whilst things are in their present train. If you can get Mary† down I shall be very happy; I leave it to you as I am with my head, hands, and heart so full of business that I have hardly time to subscribe myself.—Yours. T.W.T. ‡

During the year 1792, Tone was taken up almost entirely with his work as secretary of the Catholic Committee, and he exercised no small influence upon the fortunes of that body. His appointment coincided with the ending of a disastrous period, when deserted by their erstwhile leaders and openly flouted by every creature of the Government, the political fortunes of the Irish Catholics were at a very low ebb. To the improvement that followed, Tone materially contributed and there can be no doubt that had the

\* Their eldest son, born 1790.

† Tone's only sister.

‡ This letter was published in *Tone's Life*, by his son

Catholic leaders been more swayed by his advice than they were the illusory concessions which they won in the following year, would have been both more extensive and of greater practical value. He still, however, found time to do much towards reconciling the feuds between Protestant and Catholic so deliberately fomented by the faction which controlled the Government of Ireland. The leading members of the Catholic Committee and many of the Dissenters of Belfast joined in this work, and their success in promoting a union amongst Irishmen quickly alarmed a Government whose power was based so largely upon the maintenance of disunion. On this work, Tone repeatedly travelled to many parts of Ireland and had the satisfaction of seeing the Society of United Irishmen rapidly become a potent factor in Irish affairs.

While immersed in politics the numberless friendships which he had formed were never suffered to lapse, and few men so absorbed in public life found time for so complete an enjoyment of social events, and the company of his wife and children. In the few letters to his friend Russell which have been preserved there is less of politics than of gaiety and affection. Among the Russell papers\* are two letters, the first of which was written partly by Mrs. Tone and partly by her

\* Papers of Thomas Russell. Library of T.C., D.

husband, and addressed to Russell's sister, which show well the depth of affection existing between the two men.

(In Mrs. Tone's writing):—

Thursday, September.

My Dear Miss Russell,

I received your kind letter and Tom's note, which I would have answered immediately only I expected to go to see my William every Sunday since and I wished to give you some account of our darling boy as I know it would be interesting to you. Tone has constantly disappointed me, and though he has promised to come with me next Sunday certainly, I shall wait no longer.

Will you excuse me if I write you a ladylike letter and tell you that I am to dine to-day at Mr. Dixon's at Kilmainham with a horrible large company. I have been invited frequently and always sent an apology, but to-day it was impossible. I never saw one of the family, and I am frightened out of my wits. I am to be as fine as a jay.

I spent the other evening with Mrs. Poitier, and, indeed, my spirits were quite sunk at being in the house where I spent so many pleasant days with you and your dear father, I could not raise them the whole evening. I believe I recollected particularly every day that we spent together



since I know you, and Tom's coming down to Irishtown and eating a herring with us after *swearing* he would not come. We have no such friends now.

Will you return him my sincere thanks for his charming note. Tell him that I have put it up with "volumes which I prize above my Dukedom" and that (as my Maria says) I am always striving to be good in hopes that I may one day deserve the kind things he says to me. If all men knew how to treat women as Tom does, we would be much better than we are.

(The letter is here continued in Wolfe Tone's writing):—

Mrs. Tone has been writing some of her stuff and I must finish it, she says, while she is dressing. Will you tell Tom from me that he owes me a letter, and this makes two. My last was a long one, though there was nothing in it! I see by the papers that Colonel Knox is got safe as far as London; he arrived in the Essex.

I wish to God we had Ambrose and Nancy (you see I have got her name), over and I think we should make out a pleasant set. As for you, Mr. Tom, it is very hard that you will not answer a body's letter when they write to you. How did you like Kudex\*? I sent one to Jack by the same

\* Probably refers to a newspaper article written by Tone and signed Kudex.

post that I last wrote to you, but he had some good breeding and answered my letter in one containing many civil things, etc., etc.

I am going to dine at your friend, Dixon's. I would rather than all the money in my pocket, which amounts to no less a sum than 18s. 5d. sterling, that I had you and Jack\* to dine with me to-day. Mrs. Tone has said, and God knows how truly, that "*we have no such friends as you now.*" You will see in a *Northern Star*† soon a short view of the Constitution of America done by me. It is only an abridgment from one of two books. Give my love sincerely to your father and believe me sincerely yours, BUREAU DE PUZY.‡  
September 5th, 1792.

I wore my Belfast regimentals last Sunday—Every soldier I met saluted me and all the Sentries carried their arms, etc., etc. I do assure you I was fool enough to be *excessively pleased*—much more than you would think I could be with such a trifle. I subjoin some lines from that sublime genius, *O'Keeffe*, very applicable to the present subject and proper to be kept in all families:—

As I pass the Sentry box,  
Soldiers rest their bright firelocks,

\*Russell's brothers.

†The Organ of the Northern United Irishmen; published in Belfast

‡Tone used many nicknames

Each about his musquet knocks,  
Rattle-dum, slap, to me.

I am sure the fellows took me for the Dutch  
Bronswig or Marshall Saxe, or Frederic the Second,  
or Major Read, or some such great commander.  
Direct to me at the College, I am leaving my lodgings\*

Dear Tom,

I have just received yours, and should be much more shocked than I am, but that I have been acquainted with your heavy loss this some time back in a manner which I am now to inform you of. The day that you left my cabin on your way to town, a letter came for you (which I now enclose) *with the seal broken*. You will see that the direction is remarkably like Digge's handwriting, at least, I thought so. Under those circumstances, and being curious to know his fate, I did not consider it any breach of confidence in me, the letter being in fact, open, to look at the contents, which I was equally disappointed and distressed at finding to be the news of your brother's death. When I recovered the first shock I was, for some time, at a loss whether I should communicate the letter to you or keep it back, and at last consulting with Matty, whose concern was equal to my own, we resolved to withhold

\* This incident is recorded in his *Journal* for 1st September, '92.

it for some time. We knew you were about going to Belfast and we both thought so severe a blow coming upon you at a time when your situation was so unsettled, otherwise\* might be too much for your resolution, or, indeed, for that of any man. We also thought that ill-tidings would come at all times soon enough, and, therefore, on the whole, we resolved to lay by the letter for some little time. As you are informed from another quarter, I now enclose it to you, and I hope you will in justice to our motive forgive our keeping it back so long. We have saved you some weeks additional distress.

With regard to consolation, as I would not receive it under your circumstances, I shall not pretend to offer it. Time alone will remove your grief, and it is some comfort that it will, however slowly, certainly remove it. A more solid comfort you may draw from the reflection that your sister has still a friend willing, and I trust in God, able to assist her. I can assure you I feel deeply on her account, but a great part of my uneasiness is removed by the receipt of your letter.

To come to ordinary business, I sent your trunk by the Mail Coach on Monday week, so I hope you have it before this. I directed it to you in Belfast, so if it has not reached you, I suppose it

\* Russell was in financial difficulties.



is lying at the Inn. I also made diligent search as you desired for Digges' note, which, however, I was not able to find. I believe I wrote you word so, but you do not seem to have got my letter; those, I believe, were your only commissions to me.

In return, I will beg of you to speak to my friend, McCracken about Arthur.\* He is so intolerably idle that we can get no good of him, and besides seems bent on the sea, and my theory is that it is foolish to struggle against a propensity of that kind. I cannot find he is in any way vicious but he mitches perpetually from school and runs away to the Co. Kildare, &c.† So I think it best to let him have his fling; perhaps a voyage or two may cool him. He is a fine, smart boy, just turned of twelve, and stout enough. Read this to McCracken and let me know his answer as soon as you can.

Adieu, dear Tom, I will only add to this by suggesting that *assiduous employment* is, I believe, the most effectual remedy for grief. Write by return of post, and let us know how you are. You have not in any of your letters said one word of yourself, which is unkind. Matty sends her love most heartily to you, and I am, dear Tom, yours very sincerely, T. W. TONE.

March 12th, 1794.

\*Tones youngest brother.

† Matthew Tone was living at Prosperous, Co. Kildare.

Affairs in Ireland marched fast in the latter years of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution, following the American War of Independence stirred the people from the lethargy that had oppressed them ever since the disastrous conclusion of the Williamite war. The Penal Laws, submitted to with a patience strangely tragic and terrible were, towards the end of the century and under the new influences stirring throughout Europe, no longer easily to be borne. The Volunteer movement of 1782 and the liberation of Ireland from English law-making had seemed to promise a new era of liberty to a people crushed under a system of serfdom that can hardly be paralleled in modern history. But the fair promises of 1782 were unmatched by any performances that could bring relief to the Irish People. The Volunteers after a brief though glorious period of activity were by their poltroon leaders allowed, where they were not encouraged, to lapse into a nominal and ineffective existence. The Irish Parliament which had been liberated by the enthusiasm and courage of the people was controlled by a small class of landlords who were as selfish as they were blind to their own and their country's interests. They had by the help of the people secured a great measure of political autonomy and only by the strength of the people could they hope to retain it from the jealous and

grasping caste that was the Government of England.

As arrogant as they were blind, they kicked away the ladder on which they had mounted to the seat of Government they spurned their natural support and wanting it came in a few years tumbling down, involving the whole of Ireland in the ruin that their narrow folly had brought upon them.

Tone described the Revolution of 1782 by which the Irish Parliament had won a nominal autonomy in the following terms:—

I have said that we have no National Government. Before the year 1782 it was not pretended that we had. I assert that the Revolution of 1782 was the most bungling, imperfect business that ever threw ridicule on a lofty epithet by assuming it unworthily; it is not pleasant to any Irishman to make such a confession, but it cannot be helped if the truth will have it so; it is much better we should know and feel our real state than delude ourselves or be gulled by our enemies with praises which we do not deserve or imaginary blessings which we do not enjoy.

I leave it to the admirers of that era to vent flowing declamations on its theoretical advantages, and its visionary glories; it is a fine subject, and peculiarly flattering to my countrymen. Be mine

the unpleasing task to strip of its plumage and its tinsel and shew the naked figure.

The Revolution of 1782 was a revolution which enabled Irishmen to sell, at a much higher price, their honour, their integrity, and the interests of their country; it was a Revolution which, while at one stroke it doubled the value of every borough-monger in the Kingdom, left three-fourths of our countrymen slaves as it found them, and the Government of Ireland in the base and wicked and contemptible hands, who had spent their lives in degrading and plundering her. Who of the veteran enemies of the country lost his place or his pension? Who was called forth to station or office from the ranks of the opposition? Not one. The power remained in the hands of our enemies, again, to be exerted for our ruin, with this difference: that, formerly, we had our distresses, our injuries, and our insults *gratis*, at the hands of England; but now we pay very dearly to receive the same with aggravation through the hands of Irishmen, an administration consisting numerically of the individuals who had opposed the extension of your commerce in 1779, and the amelioration of your constitution in 1782. You find, or you are utterly senseless, that you have no weight whatsoever; that administration despise and laugh at you,



and that while you remain in your present state of apathy and ignorance, they will continue to insult and to condemn you.

This criticism of the Irish Parliament was written in 1791, and was amply justified. Tone saw that a sweeping reform of its constitution was first necessary and for this he laboured both in the Society of United Irishmen and in the Catholic Committee until the futility of expecting any reform from that thoroughly corrupted body became apparent, he then laboured to overturn it and to establish an independent Irish Republic.

Tone's mental progress during this period and his final acceptance of the uselessness of expecting either honesty or good policy from the corrupt gang who called themselves the Government of Ireland at this period is best portrayed in his autobiography and to that immortal book my readers are referred. It were futile to attempt an account of what he himself has written so incomparably well. It is sufficient here to briefly record events and to trace his actions so far as is necessary to the understanding of the few letters which have survived.

The history, too, of his work for and with the Catholic Committee, of his endeavours to strengthen the Catholic demand for the abolition of the infamous Penal Code and to stiffen the attitude of some of the

Catholic leaders in their dealings with the Government must also be passed over. These efforts ended in partial success and partial failure. For the success he was largely responsible, while for the failure he was in no wise to blame. Seen now in the calm perspective of history it is undoubted that where their action coincided with Tone's advice they won; where it differed from it they lost; and after-events have amply proved him more far-seeing and more statesmanlike than any of his much-vanted contemporaries.

The progress of the revolution in France was watched with breathless interest by the most ardent spirits in Ireland who saw in the French victories the promise of a new freedom for all oppressed peoples. This view was fully shared by Tone. In his Journal, under the date of October 11th, 1792, he refers to the campaign of Dumourier against the army of the Duke of Brunswick. A report had been circulated that Dumourier had been defeated. When the story turned out to be untrue, Tone comments:—"Huzza! If the French had been beaten it was all over with us."

Holding such views, it is not to be wondered at that he was ready when opportunity offered to seek aid for Ireland from the new republic that was successfully confronting the hoary tyrannies of Europe. Hopeless of reform at home, it was natural that many

Irishmen should look abroad for any sign of deliverance.

The French Government at this time began to give some attention to Ireland as a possible vantage ground from which they could strike at England. In 1794, they sent the Rev. William Jackson—who had for some years been resident in Paris to report upon the conditions prevailing in the country. Tone was introduced to Jackson by Leonard MacNally, and these three had several conversations relative to the state of Ireland, and to the desirability of seeking for French help to establish Irish Independence. Jackson had drawn up a memorandum on the state of England, and Tone was asked to write a similar statement on the conditions in Ireland—presumably for the information of the Committee of Public Safety in Paris. This paper he gave to MacNally.

The indiscrete Jackson had as his travelling companion, a spy employed by Pitt, and Leonard MacNally though unsuspected during his lifetime has since been found to have engaged in the same sinister service. In consequence, Jackson was arrested (April, 1794). Hamilton Rowan who had also been in communication with him fled to France—but Tone determined to stand his ground and await developments. He went to a friend who was in the confidence of the Government, and frankly told him of his situation. To this friend he summed up his position in

the following terms :—" What I had done I had done, and if necessary, I must pay the penalty; but as my ruin might not be an object to the Government, I was ready if I were allowed, and could at all accomplish it to go to America." The Government were not anxious to press the case against him, and accordingly, after Jackson's trial he prepared to emigrate with his family to the United States.

In making this compromise with the Government, Tone recognised that the Jackson affair had definitely terminated his usefulness to the cause of Ireland at home, inasmuch as it was within the power of Government to effectually prevent by a long imprisonment his further participation in Irish politics—but he entered into no engagements which would prevent him taking any course he might choose to adopt in the new world, and he felt perfectly free to re-enter on his scheme of securing foreign aid for Ireland the moment he landed in America. Not only was this the case, but before leaving Ireland he sought and received the approbation of the United Irish Leaders, as well as the principal members of the Catholic Committee for a renewal of the attempt to open negotiations with the revolutionary government in France. It was agreed that having once arrived in America he should wait on the French Ambassador in that country and endeavour to obtain from him a

recommendation to his Government in Paris. If this could be accomplished, Tone was determined to proceed to France and personally endeavour to enlist the active assistance of the French Republic in an attempt to establish an independent Republic in Ireland.

Before leaving Ireland he visited Belfast and from that port he sailed. In his autobiography, he recounts the great send-off that his friends in that city accorded him. In Belfast, too, he conferred with the leading United Irishmen—and they joined with those of Dublin in urging him so soon as it might be possible to proceed to France and lay the case of Ireland before the French Government.

I will close this chapter with a letter—the original of which is among Dr. Madden's papers in the Library of Trinity College. It was written on the last day that Tone spent in Ireland prior to setting out on his mission, and was addressed to John Russell.

June 13th, 1795.

Dear Jack,

I write this from Belfast on my way to America. I have been fighting my way here a long time, and at last finding all further contest on my part unprofitable, and indeed, impossible, I yield to what I cannot any longer oppose. Under this emigration I find complete support in the testimony of my own



conscience, the spirit of my family and the kindness and affection of my friends, especially those of this town, who, you who have known them, will well believe, have acted in a manner the most spirited and honourable—indeed, I am overpowered with their kindness.

I cannot leave Ireland without bidding you farewell. Be assured, dear John, I have the sincerest regard for you. As the women write, I shall make my part the shorter—remember me most affectionately to Hu Bell, whose kindness to me I feel sensibly—give my love to James Nicholson and to Harman Jones,\* they are right good lads, and I hope they will not forget me. Write to me under cover to Tom—we go on board this evening. Adieu dear, John, God bless you.—T. W. TONE.

My Dear, Dear John,

I have not time to say more than God Almighty bless you—this is my last (day) in Ireland, farewell for ever. While I have life I shall remember you with affection. Adieu, remember your sincere friend.—MATILDA TONE.

My Dear John,

I am this moment going on board, but I could not think of a letter going to you without sending you a last adieu. Be assured I shall remember

\* A cousin of the Russells.

you for ever, and I expect you will not forget me.  
God bless you, and may everyone feel as warmly  
towards you as I do.

Your Sincerely affectionate,

MARY TONE.\*

\* Mary Tone accompanied her brother to America.

## II. IN AMERICA.

Tone, accompanied by his wife, his children, and his sister, sailed from Belfast on the 13th June, 1795, and landed at Wilmington on the 1st August. A few days later, they reached Philadelphia where they found Dr. Reynolds and Hamilton Rowan—who had also left Ireland owing to their connection with Jackson, already established. Their last meeting had been in Newgate Prison, in Dublin. Immediately on arriving at Philadelphia, Tone wrote to his friend, Thomas Russell, describing their voyage and his first impressions of America.\*

Philadelphia, August 7th, 1795.

My Dear Tom,

As the post for Europe closes this evening, I have only time to inform you that we are all arrived safe and well, after a passage of seven weeks, in which the only adventure which occurred worth relating, was that we were boarded about the middle of the sixth week by three British frigates who pressed, with circumstances of great

\*From the Russell Papers, T.C.D.

insolence, and barbarity, fifty of our people, therein including *all* the hands save one, so that if we, fortunately, had not had moderate weather, it would have been next to a miracle if we had ever got in. You will judge how this circumstance went down with me, especially when I tell you that I was very near having the honour myself to serve the King, when I least dreamt of it, and I dare say if the scoundrels had known my name, I should certainly have been detained. So much for this just and necessary war. My stay here has been so short (two days), that you can judge that I can have no news of any kind for you ; I have not even called on Smith to present my bills for acceptance, but shall to-morrow.

The country is beautiful, but it is like a beautiful scene in a theatre, the effect at a proper distance is admirable, but it will not bear a minute inspection, the features are large, the weeds rank, the grasses coarse, but distance blinds all that and renders the whole a singular certainly, and, in my mind, a beautiful landscape. I am obliged to speak of the face of the country for as yet I know so little of the people that it would not be candid to speak what I am inclined to think of them. However, to my friends, I whisper that I believe them not to be amiable, they seem selfish and

interested, and they do fleece us Emigrés at a most unmerciful rate. All this, however, is a secret between us. What I am competent to say with certainty is, that the public mind is in a prodigious ferment here, regarding the treaty with England which is universally condemned, with the exception of the Chamber of Commerce of New York, which you who know that state and the spirit of commerce will not wonder at. Two-thirds of the Senate are necessary to sanction a treaty and the number on the division were twenty to ten, exactly the number required—what the President will do is not known, but I suppose he will sanction the treaty, in which case he will outlive his hard and well-earned popularity, a circumstance which I, for one, will most heartily regret; at the same time, God forbid any sense of past services should overbear truth and justice. He will live too long for the mischiefs attendant on which I refer you to Juvenal's 10th satire—or rather to Johnson's translation thereof—I have now done with American Politics.

The time is so very short, that I cannot write to my friends in Belfast. We, therefore, beg you will go to Simms, William and Robert, to Neilson, to McDonnell, to Sinclair, and to everyone to whom we are obliged, which is, indeed, everyone we know



in Belfast, and assure them that we do entertain, and ever shall, the warmest sense of their kindness and the sincerest affection for them personally. If the shortness of the time would at all admit it, we would write to everybody, but the cruel Post Office closes *this evening*: in a week or ten days we shall know more of our own prospects and situation and then we will write in detail, till then, my dear Tom, God Almighty bless you. The girls add a P.S.

Yours most truly,

*Show this letter to everyone.* T. W. TONE.

My Dearest Tom,

I cannot let this letter go without telling you that I am well and happy, by which you may guess that all those on whom my life and soul depend are so also. I shall not attempt to mention what I felt at parting you, for no language can express it—write to your sister for me, and remember me to all my dear friends at Belfast; tell them that I consider my seeing them as the happiest circumstance of my life. I will write to them the first opportunity. Adieu, my dearest Tom, give my love to John when you write, and believe me to be, ever your affectionate friend,

MATILDA TONE.

Once in America, Tone lost no time in calling on the French Ambassador, Citizen Adet. He was well received, and, at Adet's request, he wrote a memorial on the state of Ireland for the French Government. He offered also to proceed to France, but this Adet did not encourage—promising however, to transmit the memorial and to back it with his strongest recommendation, which he did. With this, Tone had perforce to be satisfied. He was very greatly disappointed, but Adet was firmly set against his going to France and without the Ambassador's recommendation it seemed useless and unwise to proceed. There was nothing to do but to wait for the unlikely chance of his memorial, which had been forwarded, inducing the French Government to turn its attention seriously to Ireland.

In this situation, Tone felt that having done all that he could he must face the prospect of becoming for the rest of his life, a settler in America.

I had now, he wrote, discharged my conscience as to my duty to my country; and it was with the sincerest and deepest contristation of mind that I saw this, my last effort, likely to be of so little effect. It was barely possible, but I did not much expect that the French Government might take notice of my memorial, and if they did not there was an end of all my hopes. I now began

to endeavour to bend my mind to my situation, but to no purpose. I moved my family first to Westchester, and then to Downingstown, both in the State of Pennsylvania, about thirty miles from Philadelphia, and I began to look about for a small plantation, such as might suit the shattered state of my finances, on which the enormous expense of living in Philadelphia, three times as dear as at Paris, or even London, was beginning to make a sensible inroad.

Having come to this decision, Tone searched the country for a small plantation, and began to reconcile himself to the idea of spending the remainder of his life in America. He found a farm of 180 acres near Princeton, and this he settled to buy, and in consequence he moved his family to Princeton and took a small house for the winter.

From Princeton he wrote to Russell a long and interesting letter which has fortunately been preserved.\*

Princeton, New Jersey,

October 25th, 1795.

Dear Tom,

I begin to accomodate myself to my situation, to forget that we are three thousand miles asunder, and sit down to write to you as if I were still at Chateau Bono. Short reckonings make long friends,

\* The Russell Papers.

and as I desire we may be so, I bring my epistolatory account up to this date by telling you that I have written you on the 10th August, the 20th September, and the 8th inst., and that I purpose writing about once a month, trusting to the mercy of the seas and the more inexorable post office for my letters reaching you. I have had one letter from you, which I answered the day I got it; I also wrote my friend Simms at the same time. Your letters were very nearly three months in coming, being dated the 11th of July. I desire that you may write once a month by the post and as many bye letters as you can find safe hands to carry, and I shall do the like in return.

I am here at an Inn, and have been so, alone, these three days setting sign and seal to the deeds relating to my farm. It is a beautiful spot, and, I believe, very healthy. The buildings are mean, and I purpose, therefore, erecting for myself a mansion in the course of the ensuing year, and, in the meantime, shall do tolerably. The soil is light and sandy and never has been properly cultivated, but I hope to show the Jersey men a pattern. They are miserable farmers, by all that I can see. I have ninety (English) acres cleared, and I intend to bring fifty of them into English cultivation which is as much as I shall be able to manage

properly, and far more profitable than thrice the extent scattered as it is here. I remember once hearing a Down squire, Pottinger, say a smart . . . .\* was the best improver, and truly I begin to think so. But I meditate . . . .\* things—when I am once fixed—to wit, by next spring, I shall try by writing in the papers to form a farmers' club in this county with a small annual subscription to be laid out in purchasing an agricultural library, importing seeds, etc., from Europe for experiments, introducing articles from other states of the union and trying them here, perhaps giving small honorary premiums. I likewise, if I succeed so far, will try at least to introduce Fairs and Markets on the Irish system, of which there is no trace here, to my great surprise, for in a country thinly peopled as this is comparatively with Europe, such institutions as these periodical meetings when men can supply their mutual wants seem to me more particularly necessary. I have mentioned this to two or three people, and they all agree it would be a good thing, but nobody will stir in it. If, however, I get my club established next summer and that we go on for one year I hope to accomplish my scheme of the fairs and markets by which I shall have discharged my debt of gratitude

\* Manuscript illegible.



to the United States for the asylum they have afforded me.

I daresay you are amused at the idea of my being the father of a farming club after assisting in framing societies of so very different a nature, but I see no better way of being useful here. Independent of the practical excellence of the American Government which leaves little ground for discontent, I have determined not to interfere in any degree, directly or indirectly, with their politics. I carry this so far that I shall never assume the rights of citizenship here, let my stay in the country be long or short, were it even to last for my life *quod Deus avertat*. I am an inflexible Irishman and I will never by any act of mine divest myself of that name. Secluded, however, as I am from my own dear country, and, of course, unable to serve her as I wish, I will amuse myself and lighten, if I can, the woes of separation by doing, or, at least, attempting the little good that may be in my power.

I often think of an argument which you and I have held in which I now feel experimentally that I was right and you were wrong, which indeed, candour obliges me to allow has always been the case when we differed. You held that all countries were alike to a well-regulated mind. I do not wish you so ill as to desire you to be convinced of the

contrary by such an experiment as I am now making, but if it ever should be your lot, I believe you will feel the irresistible affection by which a man is drawn to his native soil and how flat and uninteresting the politics and parties of other countries appear. I would always except France, but even there the principle I speak of prevails, for she is contending for the liberty of every man's country.

Out of Ireland I never shall be happy, but I have no doubt but I shall be perfectly easy ; yet well as I love her, I hope you do not think I would return to her in her present state—I would exist in no country *permissu superii*. If Ireland is ever free though I am fourscore, I will return but not otherwise.

I see by the papers that the Defenders are becoming more formidable. I have the greatest compassion for them for I know the extremity of their misery and I do most sincerely deplore the rashness which drives them to sacrifice their unfortunate lives on the bayonets of the military. If they have leaders, as the papers say, surely every effort should be made by them to prevent such mad and unprofitable destruction. I see likewise that even in my own county Kildare which was so remarkable for peace and good order, the spirit of insurrection has intruded, some persons have been arraigned for

high treason in swearing to join the French, and William Johnson was assigned as one of their counsel. Pray, let me know in your answer the result of this trial for I look on the culprits as fellow-sufferers. If the Government will hang every Irishman holding the same sentiment I think His Majesty's Attorney-General will have full employment. I see likewise a serious insurrection in Dublin amongst the soldiery, but I do not think it formidable, or at least very formidable, for it seems to involve no political principle but to turn on points purely military. At the same time, a bad government must tremble at everything. If once the army fluctuates they are gone.

Now that I mention Irish affairs let me have the papers as often as you have an opportunity; I did not get the *North Star* you sent last for they were interrupted by Rabb and Reynolds which vexed me. However, I got sight of the one by chance in which mention was made of my departure, for which I feel most sincerely obliged. It was a bold exertion of friendship towards one in my situation. I should be curious to know whether the Dublin Journal took any notice of the paragraph. Let me likewise have magazines and any fugitive pieces worth sending—but all this I believe I mentioned in my last.

To return to my own affairs—I shall be for some time in pecuniary difficulties but I have latterly been so much involved in more serious ones that I disregard them—I shall extricate myself, partly like an Irish gentleman, by selling my goods, and partly I must trust to that good Providence that has so miraculously on more than one occasion, as you know, interfered to preserve me. One thing is in my favour, I never was in better health or spirits. My regret for the loss of my country is so mixed with opposite passions, with indignation, and with hope, as little to affect me. I do not know but circumstanced as I am rather serves me by keeping my mind from stagnating. I have, therefore, resolved to keep a steady eye on Europe, but in the meantime to embark in a farming system as if I were to continue here for ever. My great want is a friend, and the extent of that want I leave to your feelings. Of my wife, I need not speak to you who know her so well and love her so much ; yet, much as I delight in her, I feel a most painful chasm in the loss of your society and almost wish at times that something were to happen that would drive you after me. If that were to be the case emigration would to me lose *almost* all its pains, and you would have infinite advantages in my being before you, which I sincerely feel the want of.

When I consider the peculiar circumstances in which Ireland is placed at this moment, I am almost satisfied that one party or the other will speedily be forced to emigrate, and it is a great instance of the goodness of Providence that there is such a country as this open to receive them. I refer you to my last for my thoughts on emigration as applied to your case, and I beg you will consider them very seriously.

In my first letter, I wrote in terms of strong dislike which I very sincerely feel to many points in the American character. I believe, however, I guarded it by observing I was but just arrived, and that I spoke of the people of Philadelphia. They are the most disgusting race, eaten up with all the vice of commerce and that vilest of all pride, the pride of the purse. In the country parts of Pennsylvania the farmers are extremely ignorant and boorish, particularly the Germans and their descendants, who abound. There is something too in the Quaker manners extremely unfavourable to anything like polished society, but of all the people I have met here the Irish are incontestably the most offensive. If you meet a confirmed blackguard you may be sure he is Irish. You will, of course, observe I speak of the lower orders. They are as boorish and ignorant as the Germans,



as uncivil and uncouth as the Quakers, and as they have ten times more animal spirits than both they are much more actively troublesome. After all, I do not wonder at, nor am I angry with them. They are corrupted by their own execrable Government at home and when they land here and find themselves treated like human creatures, fed and clothed, and paid for their labour, no longer flying from the sight of any fellow who is able to purchase a velvet collar to his coat, I do not wonder if the heads of the unfortunate devils are turned with such an unexpected change in their fortunes, and if their newgotten liberty breaks out, as it too often does, into pettiness and insolence. For all this it is, perhaps, scarcely fair to blame them—the fact is certain.


In Jersey, the manners of the people are extremely different; they seem lively and disengaged in comparison, and that, among others, was one reason which determined me to settle in this State.

But if the manners of the Pennsylvanians be unpleasant, their Government is the best under heaven, and their country thrives accordingly. You can have no idea from anything you have ever seen or read, or fancied of the affluence and ease in which they universally live, and as to the want of civility, they do not feel it. What do you

think of their Government having paid off the whole of the debt incurred in the acquisition of their Independence and having at this moment, a million and a half dollars in advance in the National Bank, from which they draw six per cent. ? Governor Mifflen (the General), told me that in a very short time the State would be able to pay all their expenses by the interest of the money which they were daily lodging in the bank without drawing a dollar from the people. What do you say to a State not mortgaging its revenues to an irretreivable extent, but growing rich and living like a wealthy individual on their money in the funds ? Then go and look at Ireland borrowing two millions in one year—and for what ? I have not temper to go on. These are the things that make men Republicans. These are the things for which the lives of thousands and of tens of thousands are on a cheap purchase, and this will be yet, with God's help, the system of Ireland and of Europe.

Governor Mifflen has promised me a statement of the affairs of Pennsylvania, which, if I obtain it, I will transmit to you. If they be as he asserts, and I doubt not they are, it will be a curious document, and one sufficient, I should suppose to imprint on the mind of every good subject an adequate horror of the miseries of Republican

Governments, and a rational attachment to the blessings of monarchy. How sincerely an Englishman must despise such pimping economy in the expenditure of the public money.

 *Take notice*, Pennsylvania in her constitution approaches the nearest to the doctrine of universal suffrage and perfect equality.

I have done, for the present, with politics. To come to business, have you, as I desired in my last, by just or unjust means got together any money for me? If you have, I beg you will buy in Belfast, if you can, but if not, in Dublin 20 lbs. of Lucerne seed, 30 lbs. of sainfoin, 5 lbs. of common furze seed, and two or three quarts of the Haw stones which grow on the white or Hawthorn. Take care that the seeds be fresh and do you get them packed up carefully in the sheet lead which comes round the tea. Robert Getty I daresay will supply you, and have the whole enclosed in a small deal box, pitched in all the seams and watertight; that McCracken will do for you. If you have money to allow it, I also wish you would send me in the same package, the transactions of the Bath Society and the Linnaen which McDonnell gave me, and I forgot to bring away from his house. I also wish exceedingly for Miller's Gardener's Dictionary, two volumes, quarto, but for this, I fear you have

not cash, nor, perhaps have you any. I do not know whether they keep the furze seed for sale, but if not, it will be a pretty innocent amusement for you to go in person and gather it off the bushes for me, and if I can do anything here in return, command me. Let me see how you will execute all this like a man of business and direct the box to Mr. . . . . (the original letter is torn, and the address is missing).

This is a plaguey long letter and tolerably miscellaneous, but what can a man do at an Inn without books or company? When I get into my farm you shall have letters of a less gigantic stature—I will now conclude. My wife, sister, and children are all well. Matty will write to you the moment we are settled. I enclose for your perusal, *and yours only*, a piece of secret history; burn it when you have read it. Remember me most affectionately to all my friends in Belfast. Take special care of yourself, dear Tom, and believe me to be ever most truly yours,

WILLIAM PENN.

Tone's project of becoming an American farmer was not to be fulfilled. While he was waiting for the lawyer to draw the deeds and complete the purchase of the farm he had selected, letters came from John Keogh, Russell, and William and Robert

Simms, all telling him that the State of the public mind in Ireland was advancing to Republicanism with great rapidity, and urging him at all cost to go to France and ask aid for an Irish revolution. Nothing loth, he determined to set out for Philadelphia at once and again ask Adet to recommend him to the French Government. His wife, whose courage never failed in any crisis of their fortunes, urged him not to let any consideration of herself or their children stand in the way. A more noble, unselfish, or heroic woman is not to be found in history.

Tone hastened to Philadelphia where he was surprised to find that Adet was as willing to facilitate him now as he had previously been reluctant. He gave him a letter of recommendation to his Government, and offered him pecuniary assistance for his journey. Tone gladly accepted the letter and declined the money and with as little delay as possible prepared to sail to France. He sailed from New York on New Year's Day, 1796, and landed at Havre de Grace a month later.

Mrs. Tone remained in America until the October following, when she sailed to France to join her husband. A letter which she wrote to Russell before setting out cannot be omitted here. It is apparent from the context that the practice of opening letters in transit was as common in those days as in our



own—and it was written to pass the eye of any officer of the English Government into whose hands it might fall. It was not signed.

October 9th, 1796.

My Dear Tom,

We set off to-morrow for the back countries, and I cannot begin my journey without bidding you farewell. We are all in the highest health and spirits, and every precaution is taken to make our journey easy and pleasant. I *fired* at you some time since by Cork, and my heart has smote me for it ever since. “My dear” says I, “this is a poor wretch”—“but yet I have a little against thee.” Why did you write as if I was a *Fit*? You will judge better than I can express the delight I feel at the prospect of joining my husband, it has no alloy but the sad news we got yesterday of the total defeat of the Austrians in Italy and the deplorable state to which the poor Emperor and the German Princes are reduced; there is nothing so horribly afflicts us as the misfortunes of princes. “A begging prince what beggar pities not,” as the sublime bard hath it. Oh, for Fortunatus! That that I might look on you all before I set off. I could see Sam Neilson and his sweet little wife and children. Do you know I dreamed the other night I was

gone home and in North Street on my way to R. Simms—when I awoke myself crying in an extasy—"I'm in Ireland, I'm in Ireland, I'm in Belfast," and I cried in good earnest to find I was not. Oh, this dreadful Buonaparte, there is no knowing what he may not do.

I hinted to you in my last that your friend "yes, yes, and no, no" gave us much pain. I want the Doctor to write to you about him, but he does not like to do it, he says he hopes there is no danger of him; to be sure the Doctor knows best, but I'm not satisfied.

Never can I find words to express my gratitude to Dr. Reynolds for his kindness and animated attention to us since we came here; he is one of my first favourites. I never knew a man possessed of better principles or finer feelings. . . .

Remember me with sincere affection to all my dear friends, particularly *Jane*, but don't forget my\* . . . . Never fear, a day will certainly come when everyone may do right and be happy, at present, they are incompatible. I will write a few lines to Robert Simms. I hope you will get this safe, but we don't know what to hope (or) fear from these desperate French.

Ever yours.

\* Letter illegible.

I hear from Arthur that my dear little sister is married. I enclose you a note for her, it contains just nothing. Arthur or his mother will send it for you—it is an amulet. I hope her husband is a sensible man, but I'm afraid he is too handsome.

Am yours.

What I mentioned to you of your friend is between ourselves unless you hear from Reynolds.

## III. IN FRANCE.

Tone landed in France on the 1st February, 1796. He lost no time in presenting himself to Monroe, the American Ambassador, and to Charles de la Croix, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. He was extremely well received and was told that a letter was actually on its way to America requesting that he might come over immediately to confer with the French Government on the subject of a French expedition to Ireland. The French Government was ready to send men and guns to Ireland—but had little appreciation of the forces necessary for success. Tone insisted that a small force was worse than useless. He boldly asked for 20,000 men, and when 2,000 were suggested he stated emphatically that 5,000 was the least that could effect anything—but that if ably led and well equipped they might have a bare chance of pulling through.

He further insisted that with 5,000 men the landing must be near Belfast—but with 20,000 or even 15,000 they might land near the capital and be in full possession of the Government of the Island within a few days.

Monroe, the American Minister, showed the greatest

interest in Tone's mission, and advised him to go in person to Carnot—the ablest member of the French Executive, and even authorised him to refer Carnot to him for the authenticity of all that he had to say to the Minister. His first interview with Carnot took place on 24th February and many others followed. Then ensued a period when hope and disappointment alternated daily. Promises made one hour would be retracted or prove illusory the next, until Tone was driven to record in his diary, “I have resolved never to believe that the Expedition will be undertaken till I see the troops on board, nor that it will succeed until I have slept one night under canvas in Ireland.” De la Croix, the Foreign Minister handed him over to Madgett, while Carnot asked him to communicate with the Government through General Clarke, both of these being Irishmen in the French service. They both appeared to be acting quite independently, and both made many promises which often proved illusory. The French Directory, however, while taking much of Tone's advice, gave him little definite information as to their intentions until their preparations were well advanced, and though Tone, thus kept in the dark, complains much of their delays in his Journals, he found after a few months that his attempt to induce them to send an expedition to Ireland was to be completely successful.



The French Government assembled a considerable army at Rennes, in Brittany, and appointed General Lazare Hoche to the Chief Command. Hoche was a soldier whose name was known throughout Europe, and he undertook the command of the expedition to free Ireland with the utmost enthusiasm. He did everything possible to hasten and to complete the preparations for his departure and took a deeper and more genuine interest in the cause of Ireland than any other of the French leaders. Tone was appointed Adjutant General in the French Army and attached to Hoche's staff.

To the French Expedition the English Fleet interposed an almost insuperable obstacle. The long neglect of their marine by the French Government, coupled with the wiser naval policy of England, had resulted in the complete domination of the ocean by the fleets of the latter. They were supreme in every sea and such an expedition as the French Government projected in 1796 could never hope to succeed by fighting the enemy, but only by avoiding a contest, by slipping past the English guard and landing in Ireland at some moment when the opposing fleet was not ready to intercept it.

Very fortunately for the French the English Fleet in 1796 was commanded by an Admiral who preferred the pleasanter part of wintering in port to keeping

up the blockade of Brest in full strength. Lord Bridport with the greater part of the Channel fleet was at Spithead when the French were ready to sail from Brest, and when the French preparations were finally completed they had the great good fortune to find that the way was open.

Amid the anxieties and activities of his preparations at Brest, Tone wrote a long letter to his wife in which he gives many directions as to her conduct in case anything should happen to him in the course of his hazardous enterprise. This letter was published by Tone's son in the first edition of the Autobiography.

Head Quarters.

At Brest, November 30th, 1796.

My Dearest Love,

I wrote to you on the 26th of May last, desiring you to remove, with all our family to France, by the first opportunity, but the ship which carried my letter was taken by the English, so I suppose you never received it; I wrote to you a second time repeating my orders and giving you very full directions for your conducting yourself in case of my not being in France at the time of your arrival; this letter I gave to the American Consul at Paris, who promised to forward it by a safe hand, on the 28th July last, so I am in hopes it reached

you, and by calculating the dates, and allowing for your lying in and recovery, I presume you are by this on your passage to Havre, and I cannot express the unspeakable anxiety I feel for your safety, and that of our dear little babies, exposed to all the inconveniences and perils of a winter passage. I trust in God you will get safe and well, and that by the time you will receive this we shall have finished our business, in which case you and I will devote the remainder of our lives to each other, for I am truly weary of the perpetual separation that we have lived in, I may almost say, from the date of our marriage.

The Government here has at length seriously taken up the affair of Ireland, and, in consequence, shortly after my last letter to you, I received orders to join General Hoche, who commands the expedition in chief, at *Rennes*, where he was quartered. After remaining at *Rennes* for near two months, we set off for *Brest*, in order to proceed to our destination, but great bodies move slow; it is only to-day that our preparations are completed, and the day after to-morrow I expect to embark on board the *Indomptable*, of 80 guns. Our force will be fifteen ships of the line, and ten frigates, and I suppose, for I do not exactly know, of at least 10,000 of the best troops in France. If we arrive safe with that

force I have not the least doubt of success, especially as Ireland is now wound up to the highest pitch of discontent. I have the rank of Adjutant-General, and I am immediately in General Hoche's family. I offered to serve with the Grenadiers, who will form the advance guard of the army, as being the post of danger and of honor, but the General refused me very handsomely, saying, that it was necessary for his arrangements that I should be immediately about his person. You see by this that as a military man I am infinitely better off than I had any reason to expect. There is the very best spirit in the troops, both officers and soldiers, and, in short, nothing can prevent our success unless it is that we should be totally defeated by the British fleet in our passage. I have no doubt but they are cruising to intercept us, and if we fall in with them the engagement will be, perhaps, the most desperate one that has ever been fought at sea between the two powers, for our orders are to submit (I mean the army on board), to the captains' orders in everything, except to strike to the enemy; of course, we must fight to the last extremity, and I have no doubt but we will do so; and if we should even be defeated, they will not take us all, and in that case those who escape will, I hope, push on for Ireland; in short, now we are at sea, I

think we will not turn back without finishing our business.

I would not write thus to terrify you, needlessly, but long before you receive my letter the affair will be over one way or the other ; I hope, happily for us, in which case I once more promise you never to quit you again for any temptation of fame, honor, or interest. After all we have suffered, a little tranquility is now surely due to us.

The circumstances under which I write compel me to address you in the most serious style. On the eve of such an expedition as I am about to embark in, and with the prospect of such an action before me as that in which it is likely we may be engaged, I cannot conceal from you nor myself that I have to expect the greatest danger and it is possible in short that I may fall in the contest : should that event happen, I hope you will have the courage to support the loss as may become you, as well for your own sake as that of our dear children. I know by what I feel at this moment how severe will be the trial, which in that case you will undergo, but the evil will be then inevitable, and the duty you owe to our darling babies must incite you to a great exertion of firmness, which I know you possess ; and, in short, whatever the effort may cost you you must not sink under it. I need not



add any cold arguments on the folly of grieving for what is not to be retrieved; I entreat you as you love me, for your own sake and for that of our little ones that you may collect all your courage, and should the very worst happen, remember, you will then be their only parent. I need not, indeed, I cannot say more.

In case of anything happening to me, and that the expedition should succeed, you will, of course, remove by the first opportunity to Ireland. I do not think so ill of my country or my friends as to doubt that, in that case, provision will be made for you and my children. In case of my death, and the failure of the expedition, I confess I am at a loss to advise you. However, not to be wanting to yourself, you will address yourself by petition to the French Executive Directory, and particularly to *Carnot*, with whom I am acquainted, and with whom I have done all my business since my arrival in France, stating the circumstances and praying relief; you will also address yourself to General Clarke, to whom you may write under cover to Carnot, to Colonel Shee, who is my particular friend, and embarked with me on this expedition, and lastly, to General Hoche, who knows my services and will, I am sure, in that case be of use to you. God knows whether all this may produce

anything, for the Government here is, I know, in the last distress for money ; however, you will at least try. If that fails, as Matt\* will, I trust in God be with you, I leave it to your common judgment and prudence to determine what may be most advisable, whether to remain in France or to return to America, in which latter case, as the little you now have will be almost totally gone, you must go to Carolina or Georgia, where alone it will be possible for you to exist, and in that case I commit you to the goodness of that Supreme Power Who has so often, almost miraculously, preserved us, entreating only of Matt, as he cherishes the memory of a brother who very sincerely and affectionally loved him, that he may not quit you for a moment while he can be useful to you, but to act as a faithful friend to you and a father to my darling babies.

I have now finished the most painful hour of my life ; I have advised and prepared you for the very worst event and be assured that the prospect of our separation cannot be more terrible to you than it is to me, but I hope we have, notwithstanding, both of us, courage sufficient to contemplate it with steadiness. Let us now turn the picture, and see what the bright side of it offers to our view.

If we do not meet the English Fleet, or meeting

\* Matthew, Tone's brother.

them, if we force our way, and, in short, if I reach Ireland in safety (that is to say, with my ten thousand French lovers at my back), there is not a shadow of doubt of our success, and when the country is once emancipated there will be, I think, no situation that I will in reason demand which will be refused me, and in that case you will see whether or not the principal desire of my life be not to make you happy ; indeed, my dearest love, you are the mainspring of every action of my life and every thought of my heart. Remember, I am now in the high road to fortune, and, I hope, to fame, for if we succeed, I think I may say, I have earned some reputation, but I can also say that neither fame nor fortune are an object with me further than as they will enable me to manifest my sense of your goodness and virtues. As I shall arrive there with the rank of Adjutant-General and with the favour of the Commander-in-Chief, and I hope the good will of my countrymen, and as an Irish Army will be, of course, directly formed, I shall, I presume, not be offered a lower rank than I now hold, and if I behave, as I hope I shall, in a manner becoming a good officer, I have at least as good a chance of promotion as another, so, at last I shall be, as Miss Mary, to whom I beg my compliments, used to say, *in my etat militaire*

In that case I shall have at least a regiment, I shall be able to settle Matt to our satisfaction, and I think as the citizen Arthur has made a voyage also in the cause, I will have a right to demand a place for him also ; so Miss Mary will have a chance to see three of her brothers in very gaudy green coats with long sabres by their sides, and then I hope she will be easy. I wear at present, a fine embroidered scarlet cape and cuffs on my uniform and a laced hat, which is only permitted to the General officers, but I shall be happy on the first occasion (would to God it were to-morrow), to change my blue coat for one as green as a leek, which I think will be *more becoming*. If I arrive in safety the other side, the first thing I shall do will be to appoint Matt my aide-de-camp, in his absence, and that will set him going advantageously ; in short, I have a thousand fine things in my head for you all if Messieurs, the English, allow me to pass clear, for as the poet hath it :

If we meet with a privateer, or a  
lofty man of war,  
We will not stay to wrangle, to  
chatter nor to jar.

It is not our business to fight those gentlemen at sea, if we can possibly avoid it, and you may be sure we will do everything in our power, and I hope yet we may get clear, in which case, as I have

already said ten times, you shall see what you shall see.

I have now finished the best and the worst that can happen us, but there remains a third way, which is that it may happen that we should be beaten back in spite of all our efforts and that I should so return in safety to France. In that case I think I shall be able to retain my pay as Adjutant-General, which as things go here will be a vast addition to our little fortune; I will then buy or hire a small farm within a few miles of Paris and devote the remainder of my life to making you happy and educating our children.

This last way, though not so bad as my first supposition, is yet just now to me a very gloomy prospect, for the reasons I am about to mention.

Since my arrival in France I have had no communication whatsoever with Ireland, but I have seen the English papers pretty regularly, by favour of Madgett, who is in the Bureau of the Minister for Foreign Affairs; I had in consequence the mortification to read in May last, that John Keogh was arrested by order of Government with Sir Edward Bellew (a great aristocrat), and several others; however, I watched the papers carefully for some months after, and as I saw no further mention of the business I am in very great hopes



that they were immediately released, and that the affair blew over, but I have no certainty. Since that time (indeed, within these few days), while we were on our march to Brest, I found an English paper wherein there was an article copied from the *Northern Star* of September 16th, by which I saw to my most unspeakable distress and anxiety that Harry Haslett and two persons of the name of Osborne and Shanaghan had been arrested that day, at Belfast, on a charge of high Treason, and that Sam Neilson and Russell had surrendered themselves voluntarily. You will judge how I felt this blow! The instant I arrived I ran to Hoche to communicate the news, and we agreed immediately to despatch a proper person to Ireland on board an American vessel, partly to obtain intelligence, but principally to give notice to my friends through a channel which I pointed out, to avail themselves of every chicane and artifice of the law to put off their trials, in order to give us time, if possible, to arrive to their relief. This person left Brest on the 7th of this month and I trust he arrived safe, but in the meantime I am in the most extreme anxiety and distress of mind. If we reach Ireland, which we may now, as I hope, do in ten days, supposing no unlucky accident, we shall, I trust, be in time to extricate them, but if

unfortunately we should be too late for that, at least we shall be in time to revenge them, and in that case woe to their persecutors.

While I am on the subject of my friends I am to acquaint you that our poor friend Major Sweetman was, unfortunately, killed in a duel near London, in January last. It was in the English papers I saw this intelligence, and I do not think I was ever more shocked in my life; I did not recover my spirits for a month after, and even yet I think of his death with the utmost regret, in which I am sure you will join me. Not to speak of my personal regret for him I need not mention what a loss we have of him at this moment when his courage, talents, and patriotism would be of such essential service. I am most sincerely sorry for him on every account, public and private, and I did not think I could have been so affected as I was by his death.

To return to our own affairs. On your arrival at Havre you will, of course, agreeably to my former directions, have written to Madgett who will forward you this, as I send it to him under cover. My first design was that you should go on to Paris, but on further recollection, living there is so very expensive as well as travelling also, that you had better fix yourselves until you hear

from me at some of the villages within a few leagues of Havre, where you will hire lodgings and make your own kitchen, etc. There is a village called Yvetot that I think would suit you. If anything should happen to me you will have no business on to Paris and in that case if your determination be to settle in France you can fix yourself in some little spot in that neighbourhood as well as anywhere else and Matt must do his best for you all in my place. If you should resolve to return to America you will be near Havre from whence you will have the most frequent opportunities; and I confess, under the circumstances I would recommend Carolina and especially Georgia where land is very cheap, before France, where you will labor, I fear, under insurmountable difficulties from your ignorance of the language, customs and manners. If, as I hope and trust, I arrive safe in Ireland and we succeed, as in that case I think we infallibly shall, still, I wish you rather to be at Yvetot for example than at Paris, for the sake of economy as well as a thousand other reasons. If you do not arrive soon, it is probable you may receive another letter with this, for the very first thing I shall do after our landing, will be, you may be sure, to write to you, under cover as before to Mr. Madgett, and I will also take care to remit you money for your

occasions, and the very first moment that my duty will permit I will fly with the utmost eagerness to embrace you all ; God only knows how I long for that moment.

This letter is dreadfully unconnected, but the fact is I write in a state of the utmost anxiety and incertitude ; if I remained in France and you were with my babies on the ocean, it would be full sufficient to keep me in continual uneasiness ; or if you were here safe arrived and I was embarked, though my anxiety would be infinitely lessened, still I should have full sufficient to occupy me ; but situated as we are I have both to encounter ; uncertain of your fate and that of our children, uncertain of my own in which you and they are so deeply interested, I think it is hardly possible to conceive a more painful and anxious situation ; add to this that I am obliged to devour my uneasiness, from the fear of appearing disheartened at the moment of embarkation. Well, the uncertainty of the affair at least will soon have an end. Ten days I think now must settle it, and I am sure no extremity, scarcely, can be so terrible as the state of suspense in which I now find myself. If we succeed in our enterprise, I never will again hazard my happiness and yours, for any imaginable temptation of honour or interest ; if we fail, at least

it is in an honourable cause, and on just principles, and in either case you shall not hear of my behaving in a manner to cause you or my children to blush for me.

I have this moment received orders to embark in half an hour. I have, of course, time to add no more. I recommend you all to the protection of heaven. God Almighty forever bless and protect you. Adieu, my dearest life and soul. Kiss my darling babies for me ten thousand times, and love me ever as I love you.

Once more adieu !

T. W. TONE.

Brest, December 2nd, 1796.

Hoche sailed from Brest on the 15th December, 1796. The wretched state of the French Navy had hampered and delayed his projects, and the opposition to his plans evinced by many of the naval officers had given him endless trouble. "God keep me from having anything to do with the navy" he wrote after he had struggled ineffectually for several months to get the ships ready to carry his soldiers to Ireland. At last these difficulties were overcome, and the ships got under way.

Never was a great expedition destined to encounter extraordinary risks and to brave one of



the stormiest of seas more favoured than this at the first was by the elements and by the mismanagement of its enemies. For nearly six weeks before it sailed the winds prevailed from the East ; and during the passage, in midwinter, fine weather with favourable winds lasted until the bulk of the Fleet reached the Irish coast. Nor was an enemy's vessel met to take advantage of the crowded and inefficient condition of the French ships.

But this unequalled good fortune was more than counterbalanced by the enfeebled state of the French Navy. The decay of material, the want of seamen, the disappearance of trained officers during the Revolution, and the insubordination of those that remained, all contributed to ruin the expedition. When the ships left Brest, from the inexperience of their officers they were unable to form, and proceeded in disorder towards the dangerous Passage du Raz. As night fell the Admiral altered the course. In the confusion and growing darkness his order was not understood. A few followed his order, the majority kept on their course, and thus at the very moment of starting, Hoche, who was on board the Admiral's ship was separated from his command. Two days after the start the French ships were divided into three bodies, each of which was ignorant of the whereabouts of the other, and after two days more, two of these

bodies united. This force comprised thirty-five out of the forty-three ships of the expedition, but the *Fraternite* with Hoche and the Admiral on board was among the missing vessels. The weather at times was foggy and it was discovered by a subsequent examination of the logs, that had the fog which covered the ocean on the 20th December lifted, the *Fraternite* would have been within sight of the main body, which under Admiral Bouvet was steering for Mizen Head.

It is curious to record that Tone, as he paced the deck of the *Indomptable* in an agony of apprehension at Hoche's disappearance, recorded in his Diary on the 18th December:—

At nine this morning, a fog so thick that we cannot see a ship's length before us . . . we may be for aught I know within a quarter of a mile of our missing ships without knowing it.

On December 21st, the main body sighted the Irish coast and they shortly made the entrance of Bantry Bay. The East wind which had hitherto favoured the French ships was dead against their entering the bay, which, from its entrance to its head runs east-north-east. Within thirty miles of their destination unfavourable winds put an end to their progress. The weakness of the expedition in the circumstances became painfully apparent. Crews,

composed mainly of landsmen with a very small sprinkling of able seamen, impeded at every turn by the soldiers who crowded the decks were unable to beat against a head wind in a narrow bay. Such conditions would have taxed the smartest ship with the channel clear of other vessels, but to a fleet manned and equipped as were the French, compelled to give way continually as they crossed each others paths, it proved impossible to reach the head of the bay where shelter would have been found and a landing effected.

On the night of December 21st and all day of the 22nd, the wind blew with relentless fury, and at nightfall, Admiral Bouvet anchored with fifteen ships twelve miles from the head of the bay. The other twenty ships were still outside. On the 23rd the wind continued, and no progress was made, and the twenty outside were blown to sea. On the 24th it was decided to attempt a landing—but no progress could be made, and during that night the wind rose to a gale. Several ships dragged and some cables parted. Soon after nightfall the cable of Bouvet's ship gave way and she began to drive upon Bear Island. A second anchor failing to hold, the Admiral cut his cables and put to sea, signalling the other vessels to do likewise. Ten of the ships held on till the 27th, including the *Indomptable* with Tone on board.

They had 4,000 soldiers aboard, but cannon, ammunition, and provisions were lacking, and this rendered landing useless. The wind changing to south-west and threatening a storm on the 27th, they were compelled to sail for Brest where they arrived on the 12th January. Rear Admiral Bouvet had long preceeded them, having arrived on the 1st of the month. By the fourteenth of January thirty-five of the expedition, including the *Fraternite* with Hoche on board had returned safe, though greatly battered by the storms to French ports. Five had been wrecked and six were captured by the English. Bouvet was dismissed from the French navy by the Directory for having too soon abandoned the enterprise.

The *Fraternite* never reached Bantry Bay at all. On the 24th she was pursued by a ship which was presumed to be an English ship of the line, and when she had thrown off her pursuer the French frigate again shaped her course for Bantry Bay. But the gale which drove Bouvet from his anchorage prevented her progress and on the 29th, meeting with some of the ships from Bantry Bay, Hoche learned of the dispersal of the fleet and in consequence returned to Brest, arriving on 13th January.

The inability of the French fleet to make the last thirty miles was the decisive factor in the failure of the attempt. They succeeded completely in evading

the English fleet. The French ships reached Bantry Bay on 21st December. On the 23rd December the English Admiral who was supposed to be blockading Brest, discovered that they had sailed, and did not know their destination. Not till the 31st December was it known in London that the French had appeared off the Irish coast, and at that time the English Home Fleet had not put to sea. Only the continued bad weather prevented the landing. Had it occurred, Cork, only forty-five miles distant, would inevitably have fallen. "We propose to make a race for Cork as though the devil were in us" wrote Tone in his diary. In Cork, were collected stores and supplies to the value of £1,500,000 including the provisions for feeding the English navy during the next year. The absence of Hoche was a disaster, but even this might have been remedied by his subsequent junction with his soldiers, had these succeeded in effecting a landing. The storms alone prevented, in spite of the inefficient state of the French navy, the success of an expedition which might have altered the whole history of Europe.\*

I must refer the reader to Tone's own account of his feelings and sufferings during the tragic days

\* In the foregoing narrative, I have followed the account given by Admiral Mahan in his *Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire*, and I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to his book.—Ed.



in which all his hopes of success were shattered. On his return to France he learned that his wife and children had come from America and were in Ham-burgh. Mrs. Tone's letter apprised him of her very poor state of health and also of the engagement of his sister Mary. To both of these he refers in a letter written a few days after his return to France.

Paris, 13th January, 1797.

My Dearest Love,

I have this instant received your letter which I have read with a mixture of pleasure and pain which I cannot describe. Thank God you are safe thus far, with our darling babies. I will not hear, I will not believe that your health is not in the best possible state; at the same time I entreat you as you value my life that you may take all possible care of yourself; for you know very well if anything were to happen you I could not survive you, and then what would become of the little things? But let me tell you first about myself. I am only this morning arrived at Paris from Brest, whence I was despatched by the General commanding the Army\* intended for

\* General Grouchy—the second in command took over the chief command when Hoche was separated from the expedition. Grouchy has often been blamed for the failure to effect a landing. He was eager to land but the ships were unable to make the head of the bay. The Admiral was dismissed and Grouchy exonerated. Tone did not blame Grouchy for their failure.

Ireland, in the absence of General Hoche, in order to communicate with the Executive Directory. I am at present Adjutant-General, and I can live on my appointments and when the peace comes we will rent a cabin and a garden and be as happy as Emperors on my half pay ; at the same time I am not without hopes that the Government may do something better for me ; but for all this it is indispensable that you be in rude health. Who will milk the cows or make the butter if you are not stout ? Indeed, my dearest love, I cannot write with the least connection when there is a question of your safety ; let me begin again.

The sixteenth of last month we sailed from Brest with seventeen sail of the line, besides frigates, etc., to the number in all of forty-three sail, having on board 15,000 troops and 45,000 stand of arms, with Artillery, etc. We were intended for Ireland, but no unfortunate fleet was ever so tossed by storm and tempest ; at length the division, in which I embarked was forced to return to Brest, the second of this month after lying eight days in Bantry Bay near Cork without being able to put a man ashore. We brought back about 5,000 men and as the General has not yet returned we are in great hopes that he has effected a landing with the other 10,000, in which case we shall retrieve

every thing. In the meantime I am here waiting the orders of the Government. If the expedition be renewed I shall, of course, return to Brest, if not, I will await your arrival at Paris. This is a hasty sketch of my affairs but I have a Journal for you in eleven little volumes; I have only to add that I am in the highest health and should be in as good spirits if it were not for those two cruel lines where you speak of yourself.

Let me now come to your affair, or rather Mary's. I will give my opinion in one word by saying that I leave everything to her own decision; I have no right, and if I had, I have no wish to put the smallest constraint upon her inclination; I certainly feel a satisfaction at the prospect of her being settled and I entreat her to receive my most earnest and anxious wishes for her future happiness. As far, therefore, as my consent may be necessary, I give it in the fullest and freest manner, and I write to Monsieur Giaque\* accordingly by the same post which brings you this. When an affair of that kind is once determined upon, I do not see the use of delay, and, therefore, I think they had better be married in Hamburgh; but I hope Monsieur Giaque will

\* Monsieur Giaque—a young Swiss merchant, met Mary Tone on the ship on which she returned to Europe, and shortly after, married her at Hamburg.

have the goodness to see you safe into France, when the season is sufficiently advanced to admit of your travelling; for I will not hear of you exposing yourself and our children in this dreadful season. Indeed, at any rate, until my business here is decided you had better remain at Hamburgh or some village in the neighbourhood, according as you find most agreeable to your health and circumstances; the expense will be much the same as in France and you will not hazard your safety. I shall soon know now whether our affair will be prosecuted or not; if it is I am of course, compelled to take my share and must return to my post, if it is not, I will go for you myself to Hamburgh; but in all events I positively desire and enjoin you not to stir until the season will admit of your travelling without injury to your health and I hope the marriage of Monsieur Giauque and Mary may render your stay, for a short period, both convenient and agreeable.

To return to my own affairs; you desire me to write something comfortable and in consequence I tell you in the first place that I doat upon you and the babies; and in the next place that my pay and appointments amount to near eight thousand livres a year, of which one-fourth is paid in cash, and the remainder in paper; so that I

receive now about eighty-four pounds sterling a year, and when we come to be paid all in cash, as we shall be some time or another, my pay will be about three hundred and fifty pounds sterling a year ; but supposing it to be no more than eighty-four pounds sterling a year, I will rent a cottage and a few acres of land within a few miles of Paris, in order to be on the spot, and with our eighty-four pounds a year, a couple of cows, a hog, and some poultry, you will see whether we will not be happy. That is the worst that can happen us ; but if our expedition succeeds, of which as yet I know nothing, but which a very few days must now decide, only think what a change that will make in our affairs, and even if anything should happen me, in that event you and the babies will be the care of the nation, so let me entreat of you not to give way to any gloomy ideas. I look upon Mary's marriage, supposing the young man to have a good character and an amiable temper, which I trust he has from your report, to be a very fortunate circumstance ; for as to riches you and I well know by our experience how independent happiness is of wealth.

When I tell you that, after tossing three weeks on a stormy sea, I have passed the last seven days in a carriage almost without sleep, you will not wonder at the lack of connection in this letter,



but I am obliged to write in order to catch the post. Your letter is dated *generally* Hamburgh, but I put mine in a train that I hope it will reach you. Henceforward, I will direct to you at the *Post Office*, where you must send Monsieur Giauque to look for my letters. I will write to you by the next post but one, by which time I hope to have some news one way or other for you. Direct your answer to *Le Citoyen Smith, Petite Rue St. Roch, Poissonniere No. 7, a Paris.*

Once more, keep up your spirits; be sure that if I am not ordered on the affair you wot of, I will go myself and fetch you from Hamburgh and as the weather will not admit of your stirring for a short period there is no time lost. My sincere love to Mary and the little ones. God Almighty forever bless you, because I doat on you.

Yours ever, J. SMITH.

Let Monsieur Giauque give his address and yours to the gentleman who will hand you this in case I should find it necessary to write by the same channel.

Petite Rue St. Roch,

Poissonniere, No. 7,

Paris, January 17th, 1797.

Dearest Love, .

I wrote to you on the 13th inst., being the day

after my arrival at Paris, from Brest, whence I was despatched by the General with letters to the Directoire. My mind was so affected then (and still is) by the apprehension of your illness, that I scarcely know what I wrote to you and I do not believe my present letter will be more connected. To begin with what interests me most, your health, I positively enjoin you not to attempt coming to France until I give you further orders. I suppose I need not say that my impatience to embrace you and our dear little ones is fully equal to that which I know you feel to see me once more ; but I cannot permit you to undertake a journey of that nature in this dreadful season when there are so few conveniences for travelling, when your health is so delicate, and you have three children whose constitution cannot possibly support the fatigue and the cold. I desire you may immediately, on the most economical system, take a lodging for yourself and the babies, and make it out as well as you can until the beginning of April. In this Mons. Giaucque, to whom I wrote in vile French by the last post, will, of course, assist you. I presume you will be accomodated equally well, and much cheaper in some of the villages within a few leagues of Hamburgh than in the city ; but you will decide for yourself. My wish is, however, that you

should rather be in a villiage, if it were only for the purity of the air, and the convenience of having new milk, of which, I beg you, make the principal part of your diet. The children, too, will be better.

By the beginning of April the stormy season will be over and then I think your best method will be to come on a Danish vessel or any other neutral bottom to Harve de Grace. It will be much cheaper, especially if you have any baggage, much shorter, and what I think more of, will fatigue you and the children infinitely less, than a journey of a thousand miles by land. I speak in this manner on the supposition that I should be at that time *on service* ; of which as yet I know nothing. If I am not, the moment I can quit the army with honour, I will the same instant set off for Hamburgh and bring you with me to France.

In my last I wrote you three words on the Fate of the Expedition. What the further decision of the Government here may be, I know not ; but, at any rate I am almost sure I shall receive, within three or four days, orders to return to Brest to headquarters, and probably some time will elapse after, before we know whether anything further will be done or attempted in the business ; so that you see by remaining as I desire at Hamburgh, you lose nothing, for, if you were even in France

we could not for some time be together, and the expense will be just the same. If I find the expedition will not take place I will apply immediately for leave of absence and join you : so once more, I positively desire you may not attempt to expose yourself and the children to the perils and fatigues of such a journey at this time of the year. Only think if you were taken ill by the road. On your *allegiance* do not stir until further orders, and count upon my impatience, in the mean time being equal to yours, which is saying enough.

With regard to your finances, all I have to say is, that I desired Reynolds in my letter to get you specie for your stock, and not to meddle with bills of exchange, and I see he did not pay the least attention to my request, "*for which his own gods damn him.*" I do not well understand that part of your letter where you speak of *having* a bill on London, for \$500 *which is not received*. However, as Mons. Giauque is, or is about to be, one of our family, and as he is a man used to commercial affairs, of which I know nothing, I presume he will do his best to recover the money for you ; but if it should be lost, let it go ! we shall be rich enough to make ourselves péasants, and I will buy you a handsome pair of *sabots*, and another for myself, and you will see, with my half-pay, which is the worst that can

happen us, we shall be as happy as the day is long. I will, the moment I am clear of the business in which I am engaged, devote the remainder of my life to making you happy, and educating our little ones and I know you well enough to be convinced that, when we are once together, all stations in life are indifferent to you. If you are lucky enough to recover your five hundred dollars, do not take another bill of exchange ; but keep your money by you until you hear again from me.

I am surprised you did not receive my last letter addressed to you at Princeton, because I *enclosed* it in one to Reynolds and Rowan jointly, which it seems they received, which is a little extraordinary ; however, as it happens, it is no great matter, for it is little more than a duplicate of the one you got by way of *Havre*.

I am heartily glad that Mart is safe and well. If I had him here now I could make him a captain and my aide-de-camp, for a words speaking to the General, so that if he has any wish for a military life, it is unlucky he did not come with you, as I desired in my letter to you which miscarried, but perhaps it is all for the better, and at any rate it is now too late to write for him on that topic. If we succeed, by and by I shall be able to provide for him and all my friends who need my assistance, and who, luckily, are not many.



Our expedition is at present but suspended ; it may be resumed, and if we once reach our destination I have no doubt of success, and in that case I will reserve for Matt the very first company of Grenadiers in the army ; so Mary will have two brothers in that case, of the *Etat militaire*, instead of one, and perhaps she may have three, for Arthur (*of whom I have not heard one word since he left Philadelphia*)\* is now old enough to carry a pair of colours.

The uncertainty in which I am with regard to the expedition embarrasses me a good deal in writing to you. If it goes on, I proceed, of course with the army ; and in that case I have the warmest expectations of success, which will set us at once at our ease. If it is laid aside, that instant I will set out to join you, and console yourself for the delay by the reflection that for the reasons I have already given you we lose no time, for at present it is absolutely impossible that you should travel.

In my last, as well as in my letter to Mons. Giaume, I gave my consent fully to his marriage with Mary. I presume in consequence, they will make no delay. If they should be married when you receive this give them my warmest and sincerest wishes for

\* Tone sent Arthur to Ireland at the end of 1795, to inform his friends that he was going to France.

their happiness Mary knows how well I love her and I hope and trust she has made a proper choice. I rely upon the friendship of Mons. Giaque to show you all possible assistance and attention during your stay at Hamburgh.

Adieu, dearest love. I send this under cover to a gentleman at Hamburgh, who will, I hope, find you out. Write to me instantly and tell me that you are well, and as happy as you can be while we are separated. Kiss the babies for me ten thousand times. If I am ordered off, as I expect, I will write again before I leave Paris. God Almighty forever bless you, my dearest life and soul.

Yours ever, J. SMITH, Adj.-Gen. ! ! ! !

I send you the names of several villages in the neighbourhood of Hamburgh, viz:—*Altona* ; *Grihdel*, hors de la porte de *Damthon* ; *Limsbuttel*, hors de la porte d'*Altona* ; *Ham*, hors de la porte de *Steinthor* ; *Eppendorfe*, hors de la porte de *Damthon*. The address of the person who will (I hope) deliver you this is *Mons. Holterman*, demeurant *Neven-Wall*, No. 123. If you remove, as I beg you may, to some village in the neighbourhood, it will be to him I shall direct my letters, so you will take care to give him your address. In all this Mons. Gianque will, of course, assist you. Adieu, once more my dearest love. *Do not attempt to quit*

*Hamburgh till I desire you.* I will not attempt to express the admiration I feel for your courage, but remember, courage and rashness are two different things. For my sake and for the sake of our dear babies, take care of your health. I am in a state of anxiety on your account, which no words can express; I doat upon you, my life lies in you, I could not survive you four and twenty hours. If you do not wish to deprive our children of both their parents do not attempt to stir until I permit you. Count upon my love for you, and our dear, dear babies. The tears gush into my eyes, so that I can scarcely see what I write, and I am not very subject to that weakness. I trust in God it is only the fatigue of the journey from Cuxhaven that has affected you. Dear, dear love, take care of yourself and do not let your impatience to see me induce you to expose your health. If that will not do, I order you, *as a General*, not to quit your post without my permission.

J.S.

11th February, 1797.

My Dearest Life and Soul,

Your letter of the 26th of last month has taken a mountain off my breast. I hope and trust you are daily getting better, and that the terrible apprehensions which I have been under since the receipt

of your first will be belied by the event. You do not know, you ugly thing, how much I love you. I hope you are by this, settled somewhere near Hamburgh where you may live at less expense than you can in the city, and with more comfort ; live with the greatest economy, unless where your health is concerned, and in that case spare nothing. In one word, take the greatest possible care of yourself for ten thousand reasons, one of which is that if anything were to happen to you I could not, I think, live without you. When I have lately been forced once or twice to contemplate that most terrible of all events, you cannot imagine to yourself what a dreary wilderness the world appeared to me, and how helpless and desolate I seemed to myself. But let us quit this dispiriting subject and turn to another more encouraging

I gave you in my last a short sketch of our unlucky expedition, for the failure of which we are, ultimately, to blame the winds alone, for as to an enemy we saw none. In the event, the British took but one frigate and two or three transports, so you see the rhodomontades which you read in the English papers were utterly false. I mentioned to you that I had been sent by General Grouchy, with his despatches to the the *Directoire Executif*, which you are not to wonder at, for I am highly esteemed by

the said General; inasmuch as, "*the first day I marched before him, thinking of you, I missed the step, and threw the whole line into confusion; upon which I determined to retrieve my credit and exerted myself so much that at the end of the Review the General thanked me for my behaviour*"; I hope you remember that quotation, which is a choice one. I thought at the time I wrote, that I should be ordered back to *Brest* but *General Hoche*, who commanded our expedition in chief has, it seems, taken a liking to me, for this very blessed day he caused to be signified to me that he thought of taking me, in his family, to the Army of *Sambre and Meuse*, which he is appointed to command, to which I replied, as in duty bound, that I was at all times ready to obey his orders; so, I fancy, go I shall. I did not calculate for a campaign on the Rhine, though I was prepared for one on the Shannon; however, my honour is now engaged and, therefore (sings),

Were the whole army lost in smoke,  
Were these the last words that I spoke.  
I swear (and damn me if I joke),  
I had rather be with you

If I go, as I believe I shall, you may be very sure that I will take all care of myself that may be consistent with my duty, and besides, as I shall be in the General's family, and immediately attached to his person, I shall be the less exposed; and



finally, "*dost think that Hawser Trunnion, who has stood the fire of so many floating batteries, runs any risk from the lousy pops of a landsman?*" I rely upon your courage in this, as on every former occasion in our lives; our situation is to-day a thousand times more desirable than when I left you in Princeton; between ourselves, I think I have not done badly since my arrival in France; and so you will say when you read my memorandums. I came here, knowing not a single soul, and scarcely a word of the language; I have had the good fortune, thus far, to obtain the confidence of the Government, so far as was necessary for our affair, and to secure the good opinion of my superior officer, as appears by the station I hold. It is not every stranger who comes into France and is made Adjutant-General "*with two points on his shoulder*" as you say right enough; but that is nothing I hope to what is to come (sings) "*Zounds, I will soon be a Brigadier.*"

If I join the army of the *Sambre* and *Meuse* I shall be nearer to you than I am here, and we can correspond, so in that respect we lose nothing; and as my lot is cast in the army I must learn a little of the business, because *I am not at all without very well founded expectation that we may have occasion to display our military talents elsewhere;*

in the meantime, I am in the best school and under one of the best masters in Europe. I cannot explain myself further to you by letter; remember the motto of our arms, "*never despair!*" and I see as little, and *infinitely less reason* to despair this day, than I did six months after my arrival in France, so (sings) "*Madame you know my trade is war!*" I think this a very musical letter.

I have written by this post to Mons. Giaque, with a postscript to Mary, on the supposition that they are married. I most sincerely wish them happy, yet, I cannot help thinking how oddly we are dispersed at this moment; no two of us together\* I am sure if there were five quarters in the globe, one of us would be perched upon the fifth. M. Giaque wrote to me about a claim he has on the French Government. If I had stayed at Paris I should have exerted myself to the utmost, though I cannot say I should have succeeded, for we have here infinitely more glory than cash; however, I hope I should, at least, have got an answer; but now as I go to the Army (*probably*), there is nobody here whom I can trust with the application; so I have written to him to keep the papers, etc., till my return, when I will do everything possible to

\* His brother William was in India, Matthew in America. Mary in Hamburg. and Arthur in Ireland

recover the money, or, at least, part of it. If I should not, after all, be ordered to the banks of the Rhine, I will immediately write him word, and in that case I will lose no time to make the proper application.

As to Arthur, I am sorry for the account you give me of him. Without going into a history of my reasons, I would advise you *not* to send for him, until further advice. A few months hence will do as well and in the meantime my advice is to let him remain as he is. If I had him *here, actually with me*, on the spot, I might be able, by-and-by, to place him; but we have not the time to wait, and so, once again, let him for the present, remain.

As to Russell, I have known of his situation near three months. Judge of the distress I have felt and feel on his account, and that of his fellow-sufferers. One of the greatest pleasures I had proposed to myself, if our expedition had succeeded, was to break their chains, and to make an example of their oppressors. I could give any thing to see the letter which you found in the papers. If you can lay hands on it, or a copy of it, enclose it to me in your next; make Giaume, or Mr. Wilson search for it. (Apropos, I have been at Madgett's about Mr. Wilson's letters, but they are not yet arrived.)

I am hammering at the possibility of writing a line to one or two friends of mine by way of Ham-burgh. Do you know whether Giauque has a *safe correspondent* in London? Consult with him, as to this, but with the most profound secrecy. If he can be serviceable, it may have a beneficial effect with regard to his claim here, for obvious reasons. I hope and rely he is a man in whom I may confide, especially in an affair which may materially serve him, and can put him to no possible inconvenience. Let me see how well you will arrange all this.

As I shall remain, at all events, for a few days at Paris, I will write to you once or twice more before my departure. I must take up the remainder of this with a line to a young lady of my acquaintance, who has done me the honor to begin a correspondence with me,

Your ever-affectionate husband,

J.S. *Adj. Gen.*!! Huzza, huzza!

Dearest Baby,

You are a darling little thing for writing to me, and I doat upon you, and when I read your pretty letter, it brought the tears into my eyes, I was so glad. I am delighted with the account you give me of your brothers; I think it is high time that William should begin to cultivate his understanding, and, therefore, I beg you may teach him his letters,

if he does not know them already, that he may be able to write to me by-and-by. I am not surprised that Frank is a bully, and I suppose he and I will have fifty battles when we meet. Has he got into a jacket and trousers yet ? Tell your Mamma, from me, "*we do defer it most shamefully, Mr. Shandy.*" I hope you take great care of your poor Mamma, who, I am afraid, is not well ; but I need not say that, for I am sure you do, because you are a darling good child, and I love you more than all the world. Kiss your Mamma, and your two little brothers, for me, ten thousand times, and love me, as you promise, *as long as you live.*

Your affectionate *Fadoff*,

J. SMITH.

P.S.—Get paper like this to write upon, and fold your letters square, like mine ; or, rather, let M. Giauque do it for you. Let him also pay Mr. Holterman the postage of my letters to you.

Paris, March 10th, 1797.

My Dearest Life and Soul,

I have *this instant* received your letter, and you see with what eagerness I fly to answer it. You are, however, to consider this but as the prologue to another, which will follow it in four or five days. I must again begin with what interests me more than all other things on earth, your health. Let



me entreat you, light of my eyes and pulse of my heart, to have all possible care of yourself. You know well that I only exist in you well-being, and, though I desire you to live and take care of our babies, whatever becomes of me, I feel, at the same moment, that I am giving counsel which I have not firmness myself to follow. You know the effect the imagination has on the constitution; only believe yourself better; count upon my ever-increasing admiration of your virtues, and love for your person; think how dear you are to me—but that is too little; think that you are indispensable to my existence; look at our little children whom you have the unspeakable happiness to see around you; remember that my very soul is wrapt up in you and them, and——but I need add no more; I know your love for me, and I know your courage. We will both do what becomes us.

In reading the history of your complaints, I have at least the melancholy consolation to see that that horrible disorder which, of all others, I most dreaded, makes no part of them; thank God, you have no cough! If I were with you, I am sure, what with my attentions about you, and what with my prescriptions, (for I think, in your case, I would become no mean physician), I should soon have the unspeakable happiness

to see you as well as ever. Rely upon it, that I will force the impossible to join you ; but, if I cannot succeed (without a forfeiture of character, which you would not desire, nor I submit to), we must endeavour to accommodate ourselves to a few months' additional separation, which, after all, considering what we have so long and so often experienced, we may well submit to. This very day the Executive Directory has ratified the nomination of *General Hoche*, and I am, to all intents and purposes, *Adjutant General*, destined for the army of Sambre and Meuse. It is barely possible that I may be able to change, or, at least, to postpone my joining the army for some time, in which case, need I say, you may rely upon my going to seek you ; if, however, I should not be able to effectuate this point, I count once more upon your courage to sustain a separation which is nothing in comparison of what we have suffered hitherto.

I purpose dedicating the next week to a negotiation, in order to see if I can, *honourably* avoid joining the army, which, after all, I may, *by possibility*, be able to do, and, in that case, I will “*fly upon the wings of love in the Exeter wagon*,” to join you and the little things whom I doat upon ; if I fail, I fail, and in one case or the other, I will

write to you instantly, to let you know the result ; but remember, dearest love and life, that, circumstanced as I am here, my duty supersedes, and *must* supersede every other consideration.

I look over your letter (*malgre* certain passages thereof) with delight. "*Jack thou'rt a—, thou'rt a—, thou'rt a toper, let's have t'other quari.*" (I beg you may sing that passage, or the beauty of the quotation is lost). What do you think I would give to *crack a bottle* with you and Mary to-night ? By-the-by, you are two envious pussies : for, in my last letter to her, there were divers quotations well worth their weight in gold, of which neither of you have the honesty to take notice, though I laughed myself excessively at writing, as I have no doubt you did at reading them ; but I see *green envy gnawed your souls* ; between ourselves, I grudge you the "*ten pounds five shillings and two pence*," which I confess would fairly purchase all the wit in my last letter. Well, God knows the heart ; (Sings) "*When as I sat in Pablon— and a thousand vagrant posies ; Passion of my heart, I have a greater mind to cry.*"

March 11th.

This letter, which I began last night, is in the style of all well-written novels, including, if I mistake

not, Belmont Castle\* where you always find two or three different dates in the same epistle. If you like it yourself, I can have not the least objection to your visiting at the Minister's: for, I am sure, in your present circumstances, you ought not to refuse yourself any relaxation that was proper, and that, is both proper and respectable. I need not, at the same time, observe to you the necessity of your being extremely guarded in your conduct, in all respects, for a thousand reasons; but this is unnecessary.

The more I think of it, the more I fear I shall not be able to join you before this campaign is finished. "*Madam, you know my trade is war.*" At the same time, it is not my intention to keep you in press at Hamburgh, if you do not yourself desire it. The beginning of May, if you find yourself stout, you may come by sea, in a neutral bottom, to Havre de Grace, as Mr. Giauque will fix for you, and so on to Paris, or fix yourself for the summer in some of the villages near the seaside, as you see best; but this we will settle hereafter. What have you done with your bill on London? I suppose you know by this that the Bank of England has stopped payment, and God knows what confusion

\*A Novel written by Tone and two of his friends, was published in Dublin.

that may produce in the commercial world ; perhaps we may lose all, which will be truly agreeable ; let me know about this in your next. I have written by a safe hand to America, to Reynolds and Matt ; and I have left it to them to decide whether the latter gentleman shall come on or not. The dog ; if he were here now, I could make him my aid-de-camp for a word's speaking. Mr. Wilson's letters never came to hand. Dear love, I cannot express to you how weary I am of this eternal separation, and how I long once more to see you and the babies. I would give a great deal of honor now for a little domestic comfort ; but what can I do ? You know my duty, and I need say no more. You know I am now in the pay of the Republic. (Sings) "*Here is a guinea and a crown, beside the Lord knows what renown,*" and, besides,—but what need I multiply reasons. I rely always upon your courage, and you may be sure on my part, I shall expose myself to no unnecessary dangers ; the campaign, too, will probably be pacific enough on our side, for it should seem the great push will be made in Italy. I must finish this with a line to the Bab. God bless you. I will write again in a week, but do you in the meantime answer this.

J. SMITH.



Dearest Baby,

I cannot express to you the pleasure I felt at receiving a letter from Mamma, with a postscript of your writing. I am delighted that your boys are well and good ; I desire you may not let William forget his *fadoff* ; as for *Sir Fantom*, I can hardly promise myself he will remember me. Take all the care in the world of your darling Mamma, because you know there is nobody in the world that either you or I love half so much ; above all things, do not let her catch cold. Have you any books to divert yourself with ? How do you like Ham-burgh ? Which would you rather be, there or in Princeton ? Write to me as soon as you get this. God bless you, my dearest baby.

J. SMITH.

Paris, March 25th, 1797.

Dearest Love,

I wrote to you, I think it was the 12th inst., so to-day, according to all probability, you should have my letter. I promised you to write again before I left Paris, and you see I keep my word. I received yesterday my order to join, and the money for my expenses, and I was in hopes to have set off to-day, but, unluckily, all the places in the Diligence were taken, which, together with

some trifling preparations which I have still to make, prevented me ; however, I have secured my seat for the 29th, which makes only four days difference, and I hope to be in Cologne by the third of next month. From Cologne to Hamburgh is not so far as from New York to Paris, and I give you my word, most solemnly, that the instant I see General Hoche I will demand permission to go and see you, and I hardly think he will refuse me, for reasons which I will explain to you when we meet, which I hope and trust we may now expect about the latter end of April, at farthest, viz. in a month from this. Dearest love, you cannot conceive the impatience I feel to join you and the little babies once more—an impatience which is multiplied a thousand fold, by the anxiety which I feel, unceasingly, on account of your health ; I am more unhappy on that score that I am able to express. I hope you take great care of yourself, and that you have advice, if it be necessary, though, after all, I am sure I would be your best physician. If I succeed in the arrangement I meditate, with the General, I shall stay for, perhaps, two, or it may be three months in Hamburgh, and then I will bring you and the little things with me into France, and we shall have a most delicious journey through Holland, and the Low Countries,

in the fine season ; but, in order to execute the aforesaid journey, it is absolutely necessary that you preserve your health, and keep up, *especially*, your spirits. I have five hundred little things to occupy me before I set off ; you must be contented with a very short letter, which you need not answer, for the reasons herein before set forth. “ *Oh, I have business would employ an age, and have not half an hour to do it in.*” Adieu, dearest life and soul, and light of my eyes ; I shall have a budget of news for you when we meet. Oh how I long for that meeting !—God Almighty forever bless you and preserve you, for me and our darling babies !

Your ever affectionate, J.S.

Dear Baby,

I wrote you a few lines in my last, and I hope you got them safe. Kiss your Mamma for me ten thousand times, and the little Daffs ; the ugly little things ! I know you hate them, and your Fadoff. But what will you say one of these fine mornings when I walk in and catch you all together ? Do you know that I intend going to Hamburgh very soon, and that I will bring you all with me to Paris, and fix you delightfully ? Will you love me then, you ugly thing ? I hope you nurse your poor dear Mamma, for my sake, for I love her even more than I love you, Miss Baby—I doat upon

you all, you little things. God Almighty bless you, my darling child.

Your affectionate father,

J.S.

*Do not say a word to mortal that you expect me in Hamburg, nor do not be unhappy if I am not there to the hour I mention ; it may be a few days later ; but your own good sense will suggest all that. Once more adieu !*

J.S.

Paris, 29th March, 1797.

Dearest Love,

I wrote to you on the 25th inst., informing you of my speedy departure from Paris. I have settled all my affairs here, and, to-day, at three o'clock, I set off for Liege, whence I proceed directly to Cologne ; I suppose I shall reach Cologne in eight days, and from the moment of my arrival I shall take my measures for joining you as speedily as possible. I hardly think I shall be refused, and you may be sure that nothing short of a peremptory order to remain, shall keep me from you ; at the same time, I do not disguise from you that I make a very great sacrifice in acting thus, and such as nothing, but the intolerable anxiety I feel for your health, could induce me to submit to ; but,

when that is at stake, I would sacrifice all the world to you.

I received your letter, with poor Tom's address, two days ago ; it was a long time coming, for it was dated the third inst. I beg you will return my thanks to Mr. Wilson for the trouble he was so kind as to take in transcribing Russell's letter. The packet addressed to him never came to hand.

Monsieur Benard, the gentleman who delivered me your last, and who is Giaque's correspondent in Paris, spoke to me of his (Giaque's) claim on the French Government, and told me that he was in some negotiation with some person who had, or pretended to have, influence here, and who was to assist him in recovering the money. I did not conceal my opinion from Monsieur Benard : for I know that Paris swarms with adventurers, and especially of that class who, like Mr. Lofty, pretend to influence with persons whom they never saw ; so that the Directory and Ministers have more than once advertised the public, in the papers, to be on their guard against all such. I wish, therefore, Giaque, unless he has very good reason to be satisfied he is at present in a safe and good track, would suspend all further pursuit until my return to Paris, especially as I expect to see him in person in a month or six weeks ; perhaps I may be able



to be of use to him, but, at all events, he will be sure his affairs will be in the hands of a person on whom he can rely. I write to him by this opportunity to that effect.

Having written to you so very lately I have nothing to add. Dearest love, keep up your spirits, and be in good health, and let me find you getting daily stronger and better. I love you and the little things more than all the world, ten thousand times ; kiss them all for me, and love me ever as I love you.

J.S.

*Do not say a word to mortal of my visit to Hamburgh, for I shall keep a close incognito, and caution Giauque and Mary to that effect. "Sarvice to Saul and the kitten."*

*You ugly thing, I doat on you.*

Baby,

Kiss your little boys for me a thousand times, and take care of poor Mamma, because we both love her so much. I expect to see you in a month. God bless you. J.S.

Cologne, April 18th, 1797.

Dearest Life,

I have this moment obtained my leave of absence, and the day after to-morrow I set out to join you. I shall proceed through Holland, as far as the frontiers of Germany ; but as George the Third

by the grace of God, happens to be also Elector of Hanover, I will not trust my person in his dominions ; you will, therefore, on receipt of this, prepare to set off to meet me at the place which I shall point out to you in my next letter, but which I do not, as yet, myself know. I rely on the friendship of Giauque to escort you, and, if Mary can be of the party, I need not say it will infinitely increase the pleasure I shall feel at our meeting. It is absolutely necessary I should see Giauque, for reasons which I will explain to him, when I have the pleasure to see him. I write to him by this post.

You will, of course, bring all your baggage, and your money, if any you have. I am not very rich, you may well conceive, but I learn that, from the first Floréal, (viz. the day after to-morrow), the army will be paid entirely in specie, and if so, I shall be able to carry on the war tolerably.

“The cloak which I left behind me at Tarsus, when thou comest, bring with thee ; and likewise the books, but especially the parchments. In plain English, take care to bring my papers.

Dear love, I cannot express the joy I feel at the prospect of seeing you once again ! I have an immensity of news for you, and all *good news*, both public and private. I say nothing of your health, because I will not suppose that you are not

well. I hope you have, before this, two letters I wrote you before my departure from Paris. I will write to you again, most probably from Amsterdam. I have voyaged so much of late that I think now I could go round the world in a hop, step, and a jump; and my voyages are not finished yet. (Sings), "*In Italy, Germany, France I have been.*" I do not know so great a voyager except Master Phantom, who had crossed the Atlantic twice before he was three years old. Robinson Crusoe was a fool to me. I am writing sad nonsense, but I am so happy at the thoughts of seeing you that I cannot help it. I have every reason in the world to be pleased with my situation, and so you will say when we meet, which I hope now will be in about three weeks. Adieu, dearest life and soul; I must go now about my lawful occasions, and to prepare for my journey. I embrace you with all my heart and soul; kiss the babies for me ten thousand times. You shall have my next, with full directions, four or five days after this. My love to Mary.

Your ever affectionate,

J. SMITH, *Adj't. Gen'l, &c.*

Dearest Baby,

I am just setting off to join you and Mamma, and I hope to have you both in my arms in a fortnight or three weeks. Love your boys for me, and let

me see that you bring them and Manma safe and well to your affectionate Fadoff.

J.S.

Remember, it is you that have the charge of the family on you.

Daffy Bab! Daffy Bab!—I suppose all my words are out of date, and that you have got new ones. But, no matter; I will soon learn them. Kiss your boys for me, my dearest baby. I doat on you.

Amsterdam, April 25th, 1797.

Dear Love,

I trust you have received my letter from Cologne, of the 18th inst. and that you have made your preparations to set out, without delay, to join me. All things considered, I find I cannot prudently advance beyond the Dutch territory, and, therefore, I have written to Giauque, by this post, to conduct you, by the shortest route, to *Groninguen*, which is the town the nearest to you that I could fix upon. You will have this letter, I trust, the 29th, and if so, and nothing unforeseen happens to prevent you, you may be, I learn, here at *Groninguen* in three days; but I allow one or two days for accidents, so I hope, deducting all reasonable deduction, to see you about the 3rd or 4th of next month, at which time I shall be in waiting at *Groninguen*. I rather suspect

I need not press you to lose no time, as I judge of your impatience for our meeting by my own.

I hope to see you so soon that I will not write you a long letter; all I have to tell you is, that everything is going on to my mind. Kiss my babies for me ten thousand times, and make great haste, but not more than good speed, to join me. I insist upon your not over fatiguing yourself; a day, more or less, makes little or no difference, and may materially affect your health.

Adieu, dearest love. God bless you. J.S.

I send this under cover to Mons. Holtermann; that to Giaque I enclose to Victor Pretre. *Remember to take leave of the French Minister.*

Dear Baby,

*"I have nothing to add."*

Your affectionate Fadoff, J. SMITH.

My best respects to the young gentlemen, your brothers.

Tone met his wife and children, accompanied by his sister Mary and her husband at Groninguen, in Holland, on May 7th, and he gives a delightful account of their meeting in his *Journal*. For a fortnight they travelled through Holland and Belgium, till his military duties called him away. Mrs. Tone went on to Paris, and he returned to the Army of *Sambre and Meuse*.



Armee de Sambre et Meuse.

Etat-Major General.

*Au Quartier-Général à Friedberg, le 14 Prairial,  
l'an 5 de la République Française, une et indivisible.*

Liberte,                      Egalite,                      Fraternite.

Dearest Love,

You see what a flourishing sheet of paper I write to you on ; but the fact is, I have got no other. I arrived here yesterday evening, safe and sound, which is, in one word, all the news I have to communicate to you. The General is out on a tour, which may detain him five or six days, so I have not seen him yet ; in the meantime, I have got very good quarters, and, as we all live in one family at the Etat Major, I am as well and as happy as I can reasonably expect to be in your absence. It is much more to the credit of the French than it is to mine, that I have the good fortune to stand perfectly well with all my comrades. You may judge how a Frenchman in England would find himself in similar circumstances ; but this observation I believe I made to you already.

Dear love, I look back on our last tour with the greatest delight ; I never was, I think, so happy, and more happy I never can expect to be in future, whatever change for the better may take place (if any does take place), in our circumstances.

It was delightful ; I recall, with pleasure, every spot where we passed together ; I never will forget it.

But that is not what I sat down to write about. How is your health at present ? How are your spirits ? Are you at Nanterre ? Have you seen Madame Shee ? How do you like Mademoiselle ? Are you fixed in lodgings to your mind ? Have you heard from Mary ? Has Giaume got you your money ? Have you bought your musical glasses ? How are the babies ? Does Maria pick at her guitar ? Is Will as good as ever ? Is Frank as great a tyrant ?

“Are the groves and the vallies as fair ?

“Are the sheperds as gentle as ours ?”

I desire you may answer all these questions, especially the two last, which I look upon as of the most importance, and have, therefore, put into verse, it being acknowledged that poetry is easier and longer retained in the memory than prose. I desire, I say, that you may answer them categorically, as also the following :—

Have you seen Madgett ? Have you seen Sullivan, his nephew ? Have you seen anybody else, whom I do, or do not know ? How did you stand the journey in that plaguy Diligence ? Were the poor little babies tired to death ? Were your *compagnons*

*de voyage* civil? Finally, how do you like France, in general, and Paris in particular?

I have now given you a reasonable litany of questions, which I beg you may answer the day you receive this. Madame Shee will tell you how she forwards her letters, and do you adopt the same plan.

For news, we have none here; we presume the peace will go on; but, if it should not, you need not be in the least uneasy on the score of my personal safety: for we, of the *Etat Major*, being the gentlemen of the quill, remain always in our bureaux quietly, two or three days' march in the rear of the army, not only out of reach, but out of hearing of the cannon; I beg, therefore, whether we have war or peace, that you may not make yourself unhappy by needless apprehensions.

I have done for the present; it will be a long fortnight before I receive your answer. Give the babies, as usual, one hundred million of kisses for me. I send this under cover to Madgett, who will forward it.

Adieu, dearest love. God bless.

Your slave and dog,

J.S.

Baby!

"Sincerely don't you pity us poor creatures in

affairs?" I am sure I have cut you there, baby.  
"Fie, what the ignorance is!"

Your humble servant,

J.S.

Head Quarters at Friedberg,

25 *Prairial*, an 5.

Dearest Love,

I have this instant received your letter of *no* date, from Nanterre, and I am above measure rejoiced that you and our dear little babies are arrived safe, and I hope, by this, well: for I cannot allow you to be sick. I have now finished my letter, which has, at least, the merit of brevity to recommend it. What, in God's name, is T. doing at Paris? and especially why does he go by a name so notorious? I will whisper you that 'tis out of pure vanity; but let it go no farther. (Sings)  
"Oh, 'tis thus we'll all stand by, the great Napper Tandy."

Allons! I am setting off this moment for Coblentz; from Coblentz I go to Treves, and from Treves, it may be, to Paris; but that is not yet decided, so do not say a word of it to *mortal soul living*. All I can tell you is, that "*I shaved a great man's butler to day.*" The General made me a present yesterday of the handsomest horse in the whole Etat Major, which has broke me: for I was, as in

duty bound, obliged to buy a handsome saddle, and furniture, &c. so (sings) "*says this frog, I will go ride,*" &c.

Adieu, dearest love; write to me instantly, and direct to me *A l'Adj. Genl. Smith, a Treves, poste restante*. The *ordonnance* is bawling for me, so I must break off here; but I will finish this letter (which I enclose, as before, to Madgett), at Treves. In the meantime, I am your's and the baby's most humble servant.

"If the tail had been stronger,

"My story had been longer."

Adieu, light of my eyes, and *not a word, upon your life, of my trip to Paris*, which may not take place.

My compliments a thousand times to Madame and Mlle. Shee. J. SMITH.

A few weeks after his return from the ill-fated expedition to Bantry Bay, Tone was again eagerly looking forward to the renewal of the enterprise. Hoche expressed his readiness to press forward with the project and the Executive Directory appeared determined to again take up the cause of Ireland as soon as opportunity offered. Hoche took over the command of the army of Sambre et Meuse, and Tone, with the rank of Adjutant General was attached to his staff, in order that he might be near him and keep



him in touch with Irish affairs. Hoche commissioned Tone to inform his friends in Ireland that both the French Government and himself individually, were bent as much as ever on the emancipation of Ireland ; that preparations were making for a second attempt which would be concluded as speedily as the urgency of affairs would admit and that it was a business which the French Republic would never give up until they succeeded. Hoche's attitude was endorsed by the French Directory who gave a solemn and definite undertaking "that they would make no peace with England wherein the interests of Ireland should not be fully discussed agreeably to the wishes of the people of that country."

Within a few months a formidable expedition was fitted out in Holland under the command of Admiral De Winter, and was ready to put to sea by the middle of July. The English watching fleet under Admiral Duncan was not superior, and every omen seemed favourable. When all was ready for departure a foul wind made it impossible to sail. The exasperated Tone as he watched all his hopes for Ireland again tremble in the balance, records his feelings in his *Journal*.

"There never was, and never will be such an expedition as ours, if it succeeds ; it is not merely to determine which of two despots shall sit upon

a throne, or whether an island shall belong to this or that state ; it is to change the destiny of Europe, to emancipate one, perhaps three nations ; to open the sea to the commerce of the world ; to found a new empire ; to demolish an ancient one ; to subvert a tyranny of six hundred years. And all this hangs to-day, upon the wind. I cannot express the anxiety I feel.

Week after week passed, and the wind still held foul. The English Fleet was reinforced, and became superior to the Dutch, and the provisions which the latter had embarked for the expedition gradually became exhausted. To meet the changed circumstances, the Dutch changed their plans, and projected a descent first upon England, and then on Scotland. But all these came to nothing. "It is most terrible," wrote Tone. "Twice within nine months has England been saved by the wind. It seems as if the very elements had conspired to perpetuate our slavery and protect the insolence and oppression of our tyrants. What can I do at this moment? Nothing.

Tone returned from the Texel to France, to find Carnot fallen from power and Hoche dying. Their successors were full of promises and good intentions towards Ireland—but when Hoche died all real hope of French help died with him. More than any other Frenchman he grasped clearly the

strategic importance of Ireland, and he was determined by every means to effect the separation of Ireland from England. His military talents and commanding position in the counsels of the French Directory gave to Tone his principal assurance of ultimate success in his mission, and it is hardly too much to say that the fate of Ireland at that period was linked with that of this French General. All prospect of effectual aid sank to the grave with Lazare Hoche.

The French Directory still promised help, and after the peace with Austria it ordained the formation of *l'Armée d'Angleterre*, appointing Buonaparte to command it. Desaix was appointed to organise the new army—Tone, never resting in his purpose went to him, and was promised a commission; he interviewed Barras, General Berthier, and Talleyrand, who gave his word that the Directory would have all ready for the invasion of Ireland, in April, 1798. He saw Buonaparte constantly, and was received by the great man with a cool politeness. He was fresh from his great campaign in Italy, and though he gave no sign as yet, was already meditating other adventures for the "*Armée d'Angleterre*" than the invasion of Ireland. Tone, however, had acquired such credit with the French Government that the Foreign Minister fearing that Pitt would send agents to France under the guise of refugee Irishmen wrote to the Minister of

Police ordering that none of them be permitted to remain unless they were vouched for by Tone, and when an Irishman named McKenna applied to Buonaparte to be employed as a secretary, though he was recommended by Tallien, Buonaparte told him to report himself to Tone who would report upon his application.

The preparations of Buonaparte were made with an extreme slowness, and it was not till the 24th March, 1798, that Tone got orders to proceed to the headquarters at Rouen. He was appointed Adjutant General in the Armée d'Angleterre. Meanwhile, events in Ireland had been moving rapidly. The Government was steadily and by inconceivable atrocities committed on the unhappy people, driving them to take the desperate step of a hopeless insurrection. Their leaders were nearly all exiled or in prison. As news of these happenings reached Paris, Tone redoubled his efforts to hasten French aid for Ireland, and once more he received a definite pledge, this time from Merlin, the President of the Directory, "that France never would grant a peace to England on any terms short of the Independence of Ireland." This assurance was repeated word for word by Barras, a few days later, but still the scourge fell mercilessly upon the bleeding back of Ireland, and still the Armée d'Angleterre was slowly being

got ready at Rouen. Promises were made in plenty, but of performance there was none. Buonaparte had taken himself off to Toulon, whither he had been preceded by Desaix, and his purpose was still unknown. The Armée d'Angleterre was left at Rouen, commanded in his absence by General Kilmaine. The French Navy was in a state of complete disorganisation, the Minister of Marine had no money—the Arsenals were empty—their naval stores were scattered over several ports, and their collection at Brest was impossible, for the seas were swept by English ships of war, and of the French ships of the line hardly any were fit to put to sea.

Napoleon at Toulon had his eyes turned to Egypt—the French Directory were no longer the masters of their Generals, they had become the servants of Buonaparte—the French Marine was incapable of transporting an expedition of any size to Ireland; and the Armée d'Angleterre was without orders, Thus matters stood when the Insurrection of 1798 broke out in Ireland. A few days before, the French Directory had informed General Kilmaine that they had abandoned any idea of an attempt on Ireland. Among the Generals, of the Armée d'Angleterre, Kilmaine, an Irishman, and Grouchy alone showed any zeal for the Irish Expedition. This was the same Grouchy who was in command of the French



troops in Bantry Bay in 1796, and has ever since been unjustly censured for his failure to land on that occasion. The fault was not his—for the truth of this surely, Tone, who watched his every action, is a sufficient witness.

When news of the Irish insurrection reached France, Tone was recalled to Paris by the Directory, and in response to his urgent pleading they decided to send what help could be hastily assembled in the hope of enabling the Irish to sustain the struggle, until effective reinforcements could be got ready. General Humbert with a small force, was at Rochelle, and General Hardy with another was prepared at Brest, but before either was ready to sail, the insurrection in Ireland was drowned in blood. Humbert was ready to sail at the beginning of August. Three Irishmen, Matthew Tone, Bartholomew Teeling, and Sullivan\* accompanied him.

\* The nephew of Madgett, to whom Tone so frequently refers in his Diary. He succeeded in passing as a French officer when Humbert surrendered at Ballinamuck, and so escaped the fate of his companions.

## KILLALA.

The Humbert Expedition sailed from Rochelle, in August, 1798. They reached the coast of Connacht without meeting with an enemy, and landed at Killala on 22nd August. Killala was captured without difficulty, and at Castlebar, Humbert routed General Lake, who had vastly superior forces.

An incomplete copy of General Humbert's despatch describing his landing is preserved in the manuscript volumes of *Reports of Courts Martial*, in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, and gives a vivid account of the first and successful part of his brief campaign.

. . . . . A landing was ordered. General Sarrazin disembarked first at the head of the Grenadiers. I ordered him to march against Killala. He took possession of it with the bayonet. I appointed him General of Brigade on the field of battle; the enemy was completely routed, about twenty saved themselves by flight across the marshes, the rest were killed or taken: Almost all the prisoners requested to serve with us; I

acquiesced with pleasure in this demand. The landing was completely effected by ten o'clock at night.

6 Fructidor (August 23rd). General Sarrazin reconnoitred Ballina where he had a slight skirmish, the cavalry of the enemy retreating two leagues.

7 Fructidor (August 24th). I marched with the army against Ballina. General Sarrazin at the head of the Grenadiers, and a battalion of the line overthrew everything before them. Adjutant-General Fontaine was charged to turn the enemy; his attack was very successful, and he made several prisoners. I pursued the cavalry a long time with the brave soldiers of the regiment of Chasseurs on horseback.

8 Fructidor (August 25th). The French Army were joined by Irishmen who were immediately armed and clothed. About eight o'clock at night, I marched to Rappa, and maintained that post until two.

9 Fructidor (August 26th). The Army marched to Ballina when it took possession, and set out from that (at) three o'clock p.m. After a march of fifteen hours, arrived on the 10 Fructidor at six in the (morning), on the heights at the back of Castlebar. I reconnoitred the position of the enemy, which was very strong. I ordered General

Sarrazin to begin the attack. Some unskillful skirmishes were quickly repulsed. The Chief of Battalion Dufour attacked the left of the enemy with a battalion which was obliged to fall back exposed to the fire of more than two thousand men. General Sarrazin flew to its assistance, and repulsed the enemy. The English kept up for about half an hour a terrible fire of musquetry; General Sarrazin forebore answering it. Our fierce aspect disconcerted the English General. When the whole army arrived, I ordered a general attack. General Sarrazin at the head of the Grenadiers overthrew the right of the enemy, and took three pieces of cannon. The Chief of Battalion Ardouin forced their left into Castlebar. The enemy concentrated in the town and supported by their artillery, kept up a terrible fire. The Regiment of Chasseurs charged in the High Street of Castlebar and drove the enemy beyond the bridge. After several very bloody charges of both cavalry and infantry, led on by General Sarrazin and Adjutant-General Fontaine, the enemy were driven out of all their positions and pursued for two leagues. The enemy lost 1,800 men, of whom 600 were either killed or wounded, and 1,200 taken prisoners, besides ten pieces of cannon, five stand of colours, 1,200 musquets and almost all their baggage and stores.

The standard taken from the enemy's cavalry has been given in charge to General Sarrazin, whom I appointed General of Division, on the field of battle. I also appointed during the action, Adjutant General Fontaine, General of Brigade, the Chiefs of Battalion Azemad, Ardouin, and Dufour, Chiefs of Brigade. . . . I beg, Citizen Directors, that you will confirm these appointments and expedite the brevets with all possible despatch, and (it) will produce the very best effects.

The officers and soldiers have all performed wonders. We have to regret some excellent officers and soldiers. I shall shortly send you further details. It is sufficient to inform you that the army of the enemy, five or six thousand men strong has been totally defeated.

Health and respect,

HUMBERT.

After his victory at Castlebar, Humbert issued a proclamation, in which he decreed the formation of the Government of Connaught. The members of the Government were to reside in Castlebar. There were to be twelve members, who were to be appointed by Humbert—but John Moore, of Moore Hall, was named President of Connacht, and was specially charged with the duty of nominating his colleagues. The Government was charged with organising the



military power of the province and providing subsistence for the French and Irish armies.

No initial victory, however, could compensate for the utter disparity of strength between Humbert and the English Generals. The Viceroy Cornwallis assembled an army of twenty thousand men, and Humbert's little force was surrounded, and after a brief struggle compelled to surrender at Ballinamuck, in Co. Longford, on the 8th September. The French were treated as prisoners of war—the Irish who had joined them were slaughtered out of hand, only a few of their leaders being taken prisoner. Among these latter were Matthew Tone and Batholomew Teeling. They were hurried to Dublin—Court-martialed, and hanged.

Among the Papers of Major Sirr\*, is a long letter from Matthew Tone, written to Wolfe Tone's wife in Paris. It describes the dramatic landing of Humbert at Killala.

Donegal Bay,

5 Fructidor (August 22nd),

6 o'clock, morning.

Dear Friends Gagin and Matty,

The day I embarked at Rochelle, I wrote to you, in the letter, I gave you account of our Force, but, as it might have miscarried, I shall repeat its

\* Library of T.C., D.

contents. We are nine hundred Infantry, and about one hundred Chasseurs and Cannoniers, with twenty or thirty officers a la suite. We have, besides, three field pieces, six thousand stand of arms, and a very adequate quantity of ammunition. I should also mention a large quantity of helmets and odd clothing of various colours which the General found in the magazines at Rochelle. Pat will look droll in a helmet without any corresponding article of dress.

To come to our actual situation. Yesterday morning we arrived at the mouth of the Bay after a passage of thirteen days without seeing anything. We stood up toward Killybegs harbour with a light breeze, and got within two hours' sail of our landing place when the wind died away. This is dammed unlucky, and has entirely deprived (us) of the advantage of surprise. The wind springing up contrary in the evening, we stood right across the bay to the County Mayo, where Killala, I believe, affords a place proper to debark. Night, and the want of a pilot obliges us to anchor in the middle of the bay. This morning, we are under way again, endeavouring to get into Killala, the wind not very good. I refer you to the map where you will see that we are both in sight of Killybegs and Killala Bays without the power of entering

either—Pause here, my friends, and pay a compliment to my Patience, which suffers me to write in such a situation—you cannot expect any coherency.

We are surrounded on all sides by very high mountains. If there is any aristocrat within ten leagues of us with his glass on the top of some hill watching our motions and sending expresses in every direction—these are pleasant speculations. I hope the rogues won't have the wit to destroy all the fishing boats round the bay for we are in great need of some to help us to debark. We have not as yet seen a single boat round the bay; *on dit* that we shall be in Killala in a couple of hours. Our Grenadiers will debark in their own boats, and if there be any fishermen, the rascals shall be made useful. I have no more to add; you shall have a line from me written on the back of my hat—I have seen a print of Buonaparte in that attitude.

I o'clock in the afternoon.

My Dear Friends,

I ask pardon of the Gods for having repined; we are clear in with Killala and have taken a little brig, a thing absolutely necessary as our Frigates are too large to run close in. We have also some fishing boats. The pilot, who is *up*\* gives us the

\* A United Irishman

best intelligence in the world. Scarcely any troops to oppose us and Jemmy Plunket is at the head of the insurgents who are up in the County of Roscommon; we have also taken a Lieutenant in the Prince of Wales' Regiment of Fencibles, going from Sligo to Killala, to take the command, or rather to join a company of Infants there, ditto a gentleman of Sligo, with him, a yeoman. They, I believe, are aristocrats. I offered to lay a guinea that if we please, we will be masters of Sligo tomorrow, without firing a shot at six. God bless you. Postscript shall be dated from Killala; *en attendant* I apprise you that we hear nothing of any other squadron having arrived. Burke considers this letter as from himself.

Killala. 6 Fructidor.

Yesterday evening we landed, and drove sixty yeomen and regulars like sheep before us, a few of our Grenadiers only were landed and engaged. We killed twenty and made a dozen prisoners. The people will join us in myriads, they throw themselves on their knees as we pass along and extend their arms for our success; we will be masters of Connaught in a few days. Erin go bragh.

M. TONE.

The high hopes with which this letter closes, continued for a short time, and then inevitable disaster

overtook the tiny French force, and the Irishmen who accompanied it. Another letter, a copy of which is among the papers left by Dr. Madden\*, was written by Matthew Tone, after he had been captured, taken to Dublin, and sentenced to be hanged. It was written to the agent who conducted his defence, before the Court Martial.

28th September, 1798.

Dear Sir,

As I know from experience that suspense is the worst of all states, I hasten to relieve my friends from it; the business is determined on—to-morrow is the day fixt.

I request that no friend may come near me—sorrow is contagious, and I would not willingly betray any weakness on the occasion.

Accept a thousand thanks for the interest you have taken in my affairs. Farewell.

MATTHEW TONE.

He was hanged on the following day.

\* Library of T.C. D.



## V. THE CLOSING SCENE.

The news of Humbert's victory at Castlebar reached France and stirred the French Directory to fresh efforts to send reinforcements to Ireland. In spite of the incentive to haste supplied by Humbert's despatch, the disorganisation of the French navy and arsenals was such, that it was not until the 16th September, that another small expedition was ready to sail. One ship of the line—appropriately named the *Hoche*, and eight frigates were got ready at Brest, and General Hardy and 3,000 men were embarked. Though he was hopeless of its success, and knew he was going to his death, Tone determined to accompany Hardy. Such was the chaotic indiscretion prevailing in French Government circles, that a Paris newspaper gave a detailed account of the whole armament, and even mentioned that Tone would be on board the *Hoche*, before the expedition was ready to leave France.

Tone knew that these small expeditions were futile, and he saw clearly that there was no further hope of any attempt being made on a scale which would give the smallest chance of success. He deliberately made his choice, and having made it, played his part to the end with calm heroism.

Knowing what awaited him in Ireland, he determined before he left France, that in the last extremity he would not submit to the indignity of a public execution. He did not regard this as suicide, an act, which in any other circumstances, he strongly reprobated—but simply as choosing the mode of his death. His wife was the intimate sharer of every thought, and when she parted from him—she to stay in France and care for their children, and he to go calmly resolute to his death in Ireland—they both knew that they would not meet again. Her courage was equal to his ; she made no effort to detain him.

Sailing on 16th September, the expedition escaped the blockading English fleet—but next day, they were seen by three British frigates. One of these carried the news to Plymouth—the others followed the French ships and sent word to Ireland of the approaching danger. The French approached Lough Swilly on the 12th October, to find three British ships of the line and five frigates waiting to intercept them. Bompard—the French commodore—ordered his frigates to retreat and prepared to fight a perfectly hopeless battle with the *Hoche*. The French officers entreated Tone to make his escape on a fast schooner which accompanied the *Hoche*, and which sent a boat alongside for last orders just before the fighting commenced. He refused. The schooner reached

France in safety. The *Hoche* had lost some of her most important spars in a gale and was crippled before she met the enemy. Surrounded by five British ships, Bompert maintained a desperate fight for six hours. The masts and rigging of the *Hoche* were swept away—her wounded filled the cock-pit, with five feet of water in the hold, her rudder carried away and with every gun silenced, she lay a helpless wreck. Then Bompert surrendered. Tone commanded one of the Batteries throughout the engagement and fought with the utmost desperation.

The prisoners were marched to Letterkenny where Tone was separated from the French who were treated as prisoners of war, and was put in irons. He was taken to Derry Prison and then to Dublin. From Derry Prison he wrote to Lord Cavan who commanded in the district formally protesting against his treatment, and demanding his right to be treated as an officer in the French service and a prisoner of war.

Derry Prison,

12 Brumaire an 6,

(3rd November, 1798).

My Lord,

On my arrival here, Major Chester informed me that his orders from your lordship, in consequence, as I presume of the directions of Government, were that I should be put in irons ; I take it for granted

those orders were issued in ignorance of the rank I have the honour to hold in the Armies of the French Republic ; I am, in consequence, to apprize your lordship that I am breveted as Chef de Brigade in the infantry, since the 1st Messidor, An 4, that I have been promoted to the rank of Adjutant General, the 2nd Nivose An 6, and, finally, that I have served as such, attached to General Hardy since the 3rd Thermidor An 6, by virtue of the orders of the Minister of War.

Major Chester, to whom I have shewed my commission, can satisfy your lordship as to the fact, and General Hardy will ascertain the authenticity of the documents. Under these circumstances I address myself to your lordship as a man of honour and a soldier, and I do protest in the most precise and strongest manner against the indignity intended against the honour of the French Army in my person and I claim the rights and privileges of a Prisoner of War, agreeably to my rank and situation in an army, not less to be respected in all points than any other which exists in Europe.

From the situation your lordship holds under your Government, I must presume you have discretionary power to act according to circumstances and I cannot for a moment doubt but what I have now explained to your lordship will induce you

to give immediate orders that the honour of the French nation and the French Army be respected in my person, and, of course, I shall suffer no coercion other than in common with the rest of my brave comrades, whom the fortune of war has, for the moment, deprived of their liberty.

I am, my lord,

With great respect,

Your lordship's most obedient servant,

T. W. TONE.

*dit* Smith.

*Adj. Gen.*

No attention was paid to his demand by Lord Cavan, and a further letter was sent to Lord Castlereagh, enclosing a letter to the French Directory, which he asked might be forwarded through the French Commissary for the Exchange of Prisoners in London.

My lord,

I take the liberty of sending to your Lordship, a letter for Citizen Moiu, Commissary for the exchange of French Prisoners, enclosing one for the Minister of Marine, and a short memorial to the Executive Directory. As I send them open, your Lordship will be apprized of my situation here, and I rely, in consequence, that no measure will be adopted by the Irish Government, as to me, until the decision of the Directory be known. The honour of the French nation is pledged to support me as a citizen



and an officer ; I trust, therefore, his Excellency, the Lord Lieutenant, will be pleased to give the necessary orders that I be treated as a Prisoner of War, with such attention as is due to the rank I have the honour to hold in the Armies of the French Republic, in order to avoid the distress and confusion which must otherwise arise at the moment when so many thousand prisoners of both nations are in expectation of a speedy exchange. I mention this with the more confidence from the generous manner in which our Government has behaved towards such British officers of rank as the fortune of war threw into our hands.

I have the honour to be,

Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

T. W. TONE,

*Adj. Gen.*

Tone knew when he made these demands to be treated as a Prisoner of War that there was no likelihood of his protest being listened to by the English Government. He was too formidable an opponent to be allowed to live, now that he had fallen into their hands. His fate was sealed when the *Hoche* surrendered in Lough Swilly, and no consideration of clemency or international usage had the smallest chance of being allowed to weigh with the Irish Government. His friends, and many men who differed from him pro-

foundly in political questions did their utmost to prevent or delay his execution, but without avail. Thomas Russell in prison, wrote to many of them on the subject, and an answer to one of his letters from Peter Burrowes has been preserved among Russell's papers. Burrowes had been a member of the Political Club which Tone initiated in Dublin, in 1791, and, as a member of the Irish Parliament, he fought bitterly against the Act of Union. In the letter he disassociates himself from Tone's actions, but it should be remembered that he wrote to Russell in prison—and that, therefore, his letter would be open to official scrutiny.

Dear Russell,

I shall not hesitate to give our friend every assistance in my power. Much as I condemn his later proceedings I cannot forget how estimable a man he was, and how much he was my friend. I must, however, fairly tell you that I think his case totally hopeless, and that postponement until a trial by Jury can be had is the utmost to be hoped. In a letter to Lord Cornwallis he has announced himself a French officer, and the nature of the expedition in which he was engaged cannot be doubted.

The nature of his departure from this country will not furnish any legal advantages, and will

raise the strongest prejudice against him. I understand he has given directions that no person shall be permitted to see him. Yet, I expect he will send for me. It is the most . . . \* service I ever engaged in, but I shall not . . . \* it, and if I have anything consolatory (of which I despair), I will put you in possession of it.

Yours truly,

P. BURROWES.

Burrowes' opinion of the hopelessness of Tone's situation was quickly justified. He was tried by Court Martial on Saturday, 10th November, and sentenced to be hanged. After the Court Martial had concluded its business, and knowing that he had not now many hours to live, Tone wrote to the French Directory, on behalf of his wife and children.

From the Provost's Prison, Dublin.

20th Brumaire, 7th year of the Republic.

(10th November, 1798).

*The Adjutant General, Theobald Wolfe Tone (called Smith), to the Executive Directory of the French Republic.*

Citizen Directors,

The English Government having determined not to respect my rights as a French citizen and

\* MSS illegible.

officer, and summoned me before a Court Martial, I have been sentenced to death. In those circumstances, I request you to accept my thanks for the confidence with which you have honoured me, and which, in a moment like this, I venture to say I well deserved. I have served the Republic faithfully, and my death, as well as that of my brother, a victim like myself, and condemned in the same manner, about a month ago, will sufficiently prove it. I hope the circumstances in which I stand, will warrant me, Citizen Directors, in supplicating you to consider the fate of a virtuous wife and three infant children, who had no other support, and in losing me will be reduced to the extreme of misery. I venture on such an occasion to recall to your remembrance that I was expelled from my own country, in consequence of my attempts to serve the Republic ; that, on the invitation of the French Government I came to France ; that ever since I had the honour to enter the French service, I have faithfully, and with the approbation of all my Chiefs, performed my duty ; finally, that I have sacrificed for the Republic, all that man holds dearest—my wife, my children, my liberty, my life. In these circumstances, I confidently call on your justice and humanity in favor of my family, assured that you will not abandon them.

It is the greatest consolation which remains to me in dying.

Health and respect,

T. W. TONE (called SMITH).

Adjutant General.

On the same date as the above quoted letter, he wrote a last letter to his wife. It was very brief, for such men cannot in such an hour lay bare their inmost feelings in formal words, but as evidence of his invincible courage, and the restrained dignity of his character it remains the poignant and beautiful memorial of a man as truly great in thought as in deed.

Provost Prison,

Dublin Barracks,

Le 20 Brumaire, An 7,

(10th November, 1798).

Dearest Love,

The hour is at last come when we must part. As no words can express what I feel for you and our children, I shall not attempt it; complaint of any kind would be beneath your courage and mine; be assured I will die as I have lived and that you will have no cause to blush for me.

I have written on your behalf to the French Government, to the Minister of Marine, to General Kilmaine and to Mr. Shee; with the latter, I wish you especially, to advise. In Ireland, I have



written to your brother Harry, and to those of my friends who are about to go into exile, and who, I am sure, will not abandon you.

Adieu, dearest love ; I find it impossible to finish this letter. Give my love to Mary ; and above all things, remember that you are now the only parent of our dearest children, and that the best proof you can give of your affection for me, will be to preserve yourself for their education. God Almighty bless you all.

Yours ever,

T. W. TONE.

P.S.—I think you have a friend in Wilson who will not desert you.

He spent his last hours in endeavouring to insure that his wife and children should not be friendless, and though he had determined to see no one, he wrote to many friends, and received from them many assurances that his family should not lack protection. He wrote a second letter to his wife, the last that he penned, in the following terms :—

Dearest Love,

I write just one line to acquaint you that I have received assurances from your brother Edward, of his determination to render every assistance and protection in his power ; for which I have written to thank him most sincerely. Your sister

has likewise sent me assurances of the same nature, and expressed a desire to see me, which I have refused, having determined to speak to no one of my friends, not even my father, from motives of humanity to them and myself. It is a very great consolation to me that your family are determined to support you ; as to the manner of that assistance, I leave it to their affection for you, and your own excellent good sense, to settle what manner will be most respectable for all parties.

Adieu, dearest love, Keep your courage as I have kept mine ; my mind is as tranquil this moment as at any period of my life. Cherish my memory ; and especially preserve your health and spirits for the sake of our dearest children.

Your ever affectionate,

T. WOLFE TONE.

11th November, 1798.

After having done all that he could to provide for the future of those he loved best, Tone resolutely faced the end. Under the window of his prison, he could see and hear the scaffold being erected on which he was in a few hours to be hanged, and he declined the ignominy of the death that his enemies had contrived for him. He had secreted a penknife and that night, he inflicted a deep wound across his neck. In the early hours of the next morning, he was

discovered by the sentry and a surgeon was called in. He reported that as the prisoner had missed the carotid artery, he might yet survive, but was in extreme danger. Tone is reported to have murmured in reply, "I am sorry I have been so bad an anatomist."

He remained for eight days, hovering between life and death. On the morning of the 19th November, he overheard the surgeon whisper that if he attempted to move or speak, he must expire at once. Making a movement, Tone answered, "I can yet find words to thank you, sir, it is the most welcome news you could give me." He died immediately afterwards.

Among the collection of papers left by Major Sirr, there are a few having reference to the last tragic episode of Wolfe Tone's adventurous life. The first is a letter from Castlereagh to General Craig, authorising him to hand Tone's body over to his friends for burial. It is countersigned by Lord Kilwarden, the Lord Chief Justice.

Allowed, pursuant to the Statute, of 22nd Year of the Reign of King George III.

KILWARDEN.

Phoenix Park, 19.

My Dear Sir,

The Lord Lieutenant has referred your letter in respect to the disposal of W. Tone's body to me.

I see no objection to his body being given to his friends, but on the express condition that no assemblage of people shall be permitted, and that it be interred in the most private manner.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

CASTLEREAGH.

Lt.-Gen. Craig.

Before his death, Tone left directions as to the disposal of his few effects.

I request Major Sandys may take the trouble on the arrival of my trunk, to send it with the contents to my Father, except £25, which he will have the goodness to remit to Citizen Moiu Commissary for the exchange of French Prisoners in London. He will write to Citizen Moiu to send the money by means of the Minister of Marine to my wife, whose address I subjoin :

Madame Smith, Chez le Citoyen  
Chevalier, Rue de Batailles,  
No. 29 à Chaillot, Pris, Paris.

The remainder of the money in my trunk, amounting to about the same sum, is for my Father.

T. W. TONE. *Adj. Gen.*

1st November, 1798.

Major Sandys handed the money, intended for Mrs. Tone, together with a gold watch, to her brother, Edward Witherington, who resided in Dublin, but, with regard to the other moiety of Wolfe Tone's effects, the immemorial tradition of Dublin Castle proved too strong for him, in evidence of which we find the following petition from Peter Tone to the Lord Lieutenant :—

To his Excellency, Charles Marquis Cornwallis,  
Lord Lieutenant General, and General Governor  
of Ireland.

The Petition of Peter Tone, of the city of Dublin,  
Gentleman,

Humbly sheweth,

That your petitioner's unfortunate son, Theobald Wolfe Tone, having entrusted to the care of William Sandys, Esq., Prevote Major, a letter for your petitioner and his wearing apparel and some cash, the said Sandys delivered to your petitioner, the said letter, cash, and some few trifling articles of wearing apparel, not exceeding in value what your petitioner was obliged to pay for the carriage of the trunk containing them, but the principal articles, and which are of considerable value, he has detained and declines giving them to your petitioner, on the ground of their being forfeited property, though, if it could be supposed that in



so small a matter, a claim on behalf of the Crown would be put in, such claim would not, as your petitioner is advised be established, no forfeiture having attached, because your petitioner's son was not convicted of any offence, previous to his death.

May it, therefore, please your Excellency, to direct the said Sandys to give your petitioner an authentic inventory of all his said son's effects, and to deliver to your petitioner the part he retained thereof. &c., &c.,

PETER TONE.

Apparently, the petition was not without its effect in making Major Sandys disgorge as in the Sirr Papers, there is a copy of an undated receipt :

Recd. from Major Sandys 116 Crowns and a trunk of clothes, the property of T. W. Tone.

PETER TONE.

## VI. MEMORIES.

News of the action at Lough Swilly, and of the capture, trial, and condemnation of Tone did not reach Paris till the end of November. At first, it was stated that his wound was slight, that there were hopes of his recovery, and that the law courts had stopped his execution by the military.

Matilda Tone was ill when the news arrived, but she went at once to Talleyrand, the French Foreign Minister. Talleyrand introduced her to the French Directory and La Reveillierre Lepaux, as President, assured her that Tone would be instantly claimed as a French officer, and that English officers in French prisons should be held as hostages for his safety. The Batavain Republic also immediately took similar action, as Tone held the same rank in the Dutch service as in the French.

Mrs. Tone asked the French Government to give her facilities to join her husband and nurse him in prison; she hoped that the intervention of the French Government would save his life, and that she might be allowed to share his imprisonment.

•

The French authorities readily gave her all the credentials and means she wished, and she was on her way to embark for Ireland when the news of his death arrived, and put an end to all her hopes. It is very probable that the efforts of Tone's friends in Ireland to delay his execution, and the interference of the French and Batavian Governments would have saved his life, had he not forestalled both friend and enemy by taking it himself.

The fate of Tone and of his family excited the widest interest in Paris. When the news of his death arrived, the Directory ordered a payment of 1,200 francs, and three months' pay from the War Department to be made to Mrs. Tone, and requested her to produce her titles to a regular pension. Brieux and Talleyrand each offered to adopt one of her sons, and General Kilmaine offered to adopt them both. The French Directory decreed that the sons of Wolfe Tone be adopted by the French Republic, educated at the national expense, in the Prytaneum. Owing to changes in the Government, a regular pension was not granted until 1802.

Mrs. Tone went to live near the college, where her boys were educated. She was very poor and lived very quietly. Early in 1800, she heard from William Tone, who was still in India.

Camp, on the Gour River,  
2nd January, 1800.

My Dear Matty,

“Your several letters, of the following dates, have all come to my hand: the first, dated Paris, 1st May, being a miscellaneous epistle from the whole family, I received in September, 1798; your other two letters, of the dates of 16th December, 1798, and 20th January, 1799, I received in October last. Some circumstances prevented me from replying to them sooner; however, I hope I have answered them in essentials, having transmitted by the last month's packet, a bill on the house of David Scott, Jr., and Co., London, for the sum of £233 sterling which I hope you will have received before this reaches you. Mr. Scott was directed to send a bill for the amount, according to your directions, to Mr. Meyer, Hamburgh. And I trust that this sum will relieve your present embarrassments, until I can send a further supply. The dreadful information, respecting my dearest Theobald, had reached this country, long before your letter. It is impossible and unnecessary to describe what I suffer for this irreparable calamity. However, I feel that unavailing grief or unmanly lamentation, is not the part which is now left for me to act. Whether I loved my brother, and esteemed him

as I ought, must now be proved by my actions, and not by my professions. This most unfortunate of all circumstances, has, in its event, imposed new and weighty duties upon me, which I prepare to discharge with the fullest sense of their importance, and I hope the manner in which I shall act in this new and delicate situation, will convince you, and the world, that my love and gratitude to the best of brothers and friends, has borne some proportion to his unparalleled goodness to me on every occasion. Many words are not necessary: in short, I live but for you and the children; and I hope Almighty God will grant me life and means to fulfil the duties of a father to them, and a friend to you. And, rely on it, whilst I exist, my purse, person, and credit, shall be strained for your convenience.

The important duties of the children's education must be left entirely to you, and I have the consolation to feel that they can be no where under so proper an instructor. My part, in this business, will be to furnish the money, and this shall not be wanting. William is now old enough to be put to a classical school, and, if it has not been done already, for God's sake, defer it no longer. But I need say no more. Your own sense and observation will point out everything. Let us mutually labor



to make them accomplished, if we can't make them rich : your present situation affords you an opportunity of having them taught both French and German, and the knowledge of these languages may be of the first importance to them in life. But, on this score, my mind is quite easy, as I am satisfied that nothing will be neglected on your part. I am happy to hear that Will is likely to resemble his father. He can never follow a more noble example, and I pray to God that he may resemble him in everything, but his misfortunes.

This letter goes by an overland despatch, and I am restricted as to its weight. It is necessary, therefore, to be as brief as possible. My father, writes me word that Arthur wishes to come out to me, and that he had advised him to enter at the India House, for Bombay. But, if Arthur has not already taken this mad step, by all means prevent it. When I am able to send for him, I will ; but, if he comes out in the Company's service, I can do him no good ; and the best years of his life will be spent in blackguard idleness. On this head I will write further by the shipping. In your answer, explain your situation to me without reserve. Let me know what you can live for, genteelly, and educate the boys, and I will make my arrangements accordingly. In one word,

inform me of everything in which I can be interested. Let me know of Fanny,\* of whom I have never heard a word; what Arthur is doing; Mary's situation and prospects, and everything else that occurs.

I answered all your letters of Paris, both by ways of London and America. I know not if you ever received my letters. I there gave a long account of myself. At present, I can only say that I have been a little unfortunate of late. In June was twelvemonth, I was attacked by a very superior force, and obliged to abandon my position, with all my baggage, in which I lost all I had, being with difficulty able to bring off my corps, with their guns and colours. Ill health afterwards obliged me to go to the settlements, and I resigned my command, and continued a year out of all service, which drained me of every rupee. I am now raising a regiment in the Mahratta service, which I shall soon complete. My pay is liberal, but my expenses necessarily great. I shall write more fully by the next packet. Mention me to the children, comfort them, and keep up your own spirits, on their account. Tell my beloved Maria that I have not forgotten her. In the

\* A younger sister of his. She died of consumption, before Wolfe Tone left Ireland.

course of this year, I shall send you fifty guineas, to be laid out by her, under your directions, in finery. We must not suffer her mind to be affected, and I know, from experience, that nothing depresses the spirits of a young person so much as a want of little elegancies in dress. My love to Mary, and family, and to her husband, to whom I hope to be better known, and believe me, ever,

Your truly affectionate brother and friend,

WILLIAM HENRY TONE.

William Tone was killed in India shortly after writing this letter, and his help so badly needed by Theobald's family in Paris, was thus cut off.

During the five years which succeeded her husband's death, Mrs. Tone must have been repeatedly in distress for money had it not been for Mr. Wilson of Dullatur, in Scotland, who acted as her constant friend and adviser. He managed her slender resources and when these gave out, his own became the sole support of her little family. This generous and constant friendship was continued after he had left France, as he left instructions with his bankers at Paris, that they should supply all the needs of Mrs. Tone.

At length, after the rupture of the Treaty of Amiens, Napoleon, who had hitherto been deaf to all appeals, granted Mrs. Tone a pension of 1,200 livres for herself, and 400 to each of her three children. But before

this relief came, Maria Tone had died of consumption (1804), and in 1806, Frank, the youngest boy, also died. About the same time, a subscription, which amounted to £787, was raised in Ireland, and thereafter, Mrs. Tone and her only surviving son, William, were relieved of most of their financial anxieties. William Theobald Wolfe Tone entered the French service, and he published an account of his soldiering, in an appendix to his Father's life (Washington, 1826). In the same volume, there is an account of some of their affairs, written by Mrs. Tone.

Only one letter written during this period in France by Mrs. Tone has been preserved. A copy of it is to be found among the papers Dr. Madden placed in Trinity College.

To Mrs. Margaret Tone, c/o Peter Tone, at 10 Monk Place.

May 11th, 1810.

My Dearest Mother,

I have got an opportunity of writing to you, by a gentleman who promises to deliver my letter into your own hands, and yesterday evening I had just finished a long letter to you, and another to Kitty, complaining woefully of not hearing from you when I had the happiness of receiving both your letters of the 10th April, which rendered all I had written useless.

My ever dear mother, it is a blessing to hear from you, and to hear that you are tolerably well and that you have peace and security, and are not exposed to inconvenience. These negative comforts are all that we can now aspire to, or that would become us to wish for, and for me, I am still hardy in mind and body to dispense even with them if they were taken from me, but, indeed, if you wanted them in the town where our Theobald was born and died, I think I should, in my despair, take counsel from Job's wife. And you cannot afford to keep poor Matt's little girl by you to support and to comfort your age.

No! I will never see Ireland whilst I can find a grave on any other part of the globe by land or by water, but let me say something that will comfort you. My William, the pleasure and joy of my heart, is coming on in every respect as well as heart can wish. He is not strong in health, but he is safe; he completed his 19th year some days ago, his growth is nearly finished, and his conduct is so correct, that I have no fear for him. He has gone through his studies with great honour, he will finish them this summer, and thinks of taking a course of law. Perhaps it is time to turn his education to some account, but in this country there is but one line, and if he must take that it will be always time enough.



The powerfully . . . . \* when you see him, present him with the grateful homage of my respect, my esteem and my admiration. I cannot say more on this——.

Adieu, my beloved mother; may God Almighty bless and preserve you. William joins in every tender wish. Whenever it is possible, I will send him to get your blessing, and return to me with it. I write to my beloved Kitty. . . .

Ever your own child,

M. TONE.

William Tone remained in the French Army till the fall of Napoleon, when he and his mother decided to return to America. Their old friend, Mr. Wilson, on learning their determination, came to France and offered his hand and fortune to Mrs. Tone. They were married on the 19th August, 1816.

On her arrival in America, the Irish exiles there, many of whom had been colleagues of Tone in Ireland, greeted her with deep respect. Dr. Madden has preserved the address of the Hibernian Provident Society of New York, which was signed by Thomas Addis Emmet and Dr. McNeven, and presented to Mrs. Tone in October, 1817. It expressed the deepest admiration for Tone and for the constancy and courage

\* Dr. Madden believed that this referred to John Keogh.

of his devoted wife. Her reply, sent in the form of a letter, was as follows :—

Gentlemen,

The sweetest consolation my heart can feel, I received in the proof you now give me, that my husband still lives in your affections and esteem, though, in the course of nineteen disastrous years, the numerous victims who have magnanimously suffered for the liberty of Ireland, might well confuse memory, and make selection difficult. I am proud of belonging to a nation whose sons preserve under every vicissitude of fortune, a faithful attachment to their principles and from whose firm and generous minds neither persecution, exile, nor time can obliterate the remembrance of those who have fallen, though uneffectually, in the cause of our country. For your gifts to my son, take his mother's thanks with his, while his mother tremblingly hopes that fate may spare him to prove himself not unworthy of his father or his friends.

I have the honour to remain, with grateful respect, gentlemen,

Your most obedient, servant

MATILDA TONE.

Mr. Wilson bought an estate at Georgetown, near Washington, and settled there with his wife and

William Tone entered the American Army. In 1825, he married the daughter of William Sampson—his father's friend and fellow-worker in the Society of the United Irishmen. In 1826, he published the *Life of Wolfe Tone*, and to that volume his mother contributed an appendix on her interview with Napoleon. Unfortunately it is too long to be quoted here. In it are given many details of her life in France, and her account of her interviews with the great men of the French Government, is told with a humour equal to Tone's.

William Tone died on the 10th October, 1828.

The widow of Wolfe Tone survived the last of her children by twenty-one years. She died in Georgetown on the 18th March, 1849.

A few years before her death, Dr. Madden published the *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen*. His volumes drew a letter from Mrs. Wilson at Georgetown, to the Editor of the *New York Truth Teller*. This last letter, written in extreme old age, proved that to the end the preoccupation of her life was to safeguard the memory of the heroic husband whose trials she had shared, and whose fate she had never ceased to mourn.

GEORGETOWN, D.C.,

October 19th, 1842.

SIR,

Since the first establishment of your paper I

have been a constant subscriber to it, and have at present before me that of last Saturday, the 15th instant, in which you pass so beautiful and so just an eulogium on my ever-lamented friend, Dr. William James Macneven. But all I have suffered in the cause of Ireland gives me some right to appeal, and to complain that in that article you have not done justice to the memory of my husband, Theobald Wolfe Tone. You say, 'it was only after Theobald Wolfe Tone had been in France for some time, and had obtained a promise of aid from Napoleon and the French Directory, that these societies being repulsed by government, etc., etc., resolved on revolution, and a total separation from England.' This is all a mistake. In the year 1791 Tone wrote the pamphlet entitled, 'An Argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland,' in which the present political state of that country, and the necessity of a parliamentary reform are considered. At the time of writing it, he was not acquainted with a single Catholic, but wrote on the general merits of the case and unnatural state of the country, and printed anonymous. But the Catholic leaders called on the writer to make himself known, republished and circulated the work, and by a resolution of the general committee, John Keogh, of Mount Jerome, and John Sweetman, were ordered

to wait on him, offering him the situation of agent and assistant secretary to the general committee of the Catholics of Ireland. I may say he was both trusted and beloved by them, and he loved and honoured them. His whole time and talents were devoted to them and to their cause. He was consulted by them, and advised them—he wrote all their publications—he was the only Protestant admitted at the Catholic Convention—he wrote their petition to the King, and accompanied the delegation that carried it to England, and on the dissolution of the committee he was publicly thanked by them. I have the vote engrossed on vellum and framed, but his labours did not end here ; he travelled with Keogh, or others, wherever they could hope to make converts to the cause, and to form societies of United Irishmen, which name was invented by him, when he proposed to drop the invidious distinctions of Catholic, Dissenter, and Protestant, and adopt that national denomination. I have perceived lately that it is a sort of fashion to throw the idea of separation from England solely and entirely on Tone. This is not fair. It was his belief that if a liberal emancipation of the Catholics—a full and fair representation of all the people of Ireland in an Irish parliament—when the immense resources of the country could be developed and



honestly applied to the benefit of the country, a separation would in a short time be the certain consequence; but he did not think of separation till every other hope had failed, nor did he then think of it alone.

Doctor Madden, in his *United Irishmen*, quotes from Tone's life a letter addressed to him in this country, dated September, 1795, concluding with the words: 'Once more, dear Tone, remember and execute your garden conversation,' which he concludes to be from Emmet and Russell.

He is mistaken; it was from John Keogh, of Mount Jerome, and I have the original—a man whom Tone knew to be cautious even to timidity, and yet he wished for French aid, and promised in the letter that his son Cornelius should join them on landing. In another place, Dr. Madden quotes, and I think at least carelessly, from the work, that the United Irish Club, which Tone was so instrumental in establishing in Dublin, was scarcely formed before he lost all influence in it, which the doctor attributes to the *violence of his measures*. If he had read or quoted a little further, the following lines are: 'a circumstance which mortified me not a little at first, and perhaps, had I retained more weight in their Councils, I might have prevented, as on some occasions I laboured unsuccessfully to

prevent, their running into indiscretions, which gave their enemies too great advantages over them.' There is nothing which the heart so much revolts at as to point out even the errors of those who acted nobly and sealed their principles with their blood ; but it is the truth that Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the Sheares who had just arrived from France, in the heyday of the revolution, were acting revolution before it was made, and joined by all young and ardent spirits, spoke and acted with ruinous indiscretion ; even Dr. Drennan was caught, and published that frantic address of ' Citizen soldiers, to arms ! Citizens, your country is in danger.' Tone laboured in vain to check this folly, but there was no deceit in it ; it was honest generous enthusiasm and young excitement. About this period, the summer of '95, we left Ireland. Before our departure, Tone consulted with the leaders of each party ; for the Catholics, Keogh and McCormack—the conversation was held in Keogh's garden at Mount Jerome. He adds : 'They both laid the most positive injunctions upon me to leave nothing unattempted on my part to force my way to France, and lay our situation before the government there.' We went by Belfast, and there again consultations were held with the leading men of the Dissenters and Defenders ; all were of the same mind, and he adds,

‘I now look upon myself as competent to speak fully and with confidence, for the Catholics, for the Dissenters, and for the Defenders of Ireland.’ We sailed in June, ’95—he received letters from them all,urgently praying him to lose no time. I am told that Dr. Madden was twice in New York in search of documents for his history. I wonder he did not apply to me. I never heard of him till I saw his book advertised—perhaps he was ignorant of my existence, for I live in complete retirement, and, to use Carolan’s words :—

“Lonely and desolate I mourn the dead.”

I am ashamed of this rambling and diffuse letter, but, under the weight of seventy-three years and a broken heart, I cannot make it better, else I would write it over again—but the subject makes my heart beat and my hand tremble, and I am sure I should not mend it. I only hope you will find it legible, and take the trouble to read it. Remember, I do not write for publication, but simply for your own information, if you again refer to the subject. I should have mentioned that, on leaving Ireland, Tone again received the farewell thanks of the Catholics of Dublin, for services rendered to the Catholic body, which no gratitude can over-rate, no remuneration overpay ; it was moved by Dr. Macneven.

I beg once more to apologise for the trouble I give you, and remain, your admirer and constant reader,

MATILDA TONE WILSON.



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